

Shuna no Tabi


(Shuna's Journey)

by
Hayao Miyazaki



Sending Off

Once upon a time, an undetermined time - maybe far in the past, maybe in the distant future - was a tiny kingdom, abandoned by time in the bottom of an ancient valley etched out by mountain glaciers.



Why did people choose
to live in this barren land?

The winds blown from
the mountain made the
thin air even thinner, and
the rays from the sun didn't
warm the valley...



They scratched the dry ground and sowed the seed of the Elibabe, but the starved earth gave only a small, faltering yield.



The Elibabe were always furnished for the school with offerings and were very hardy.





What a
sad, poor
life.



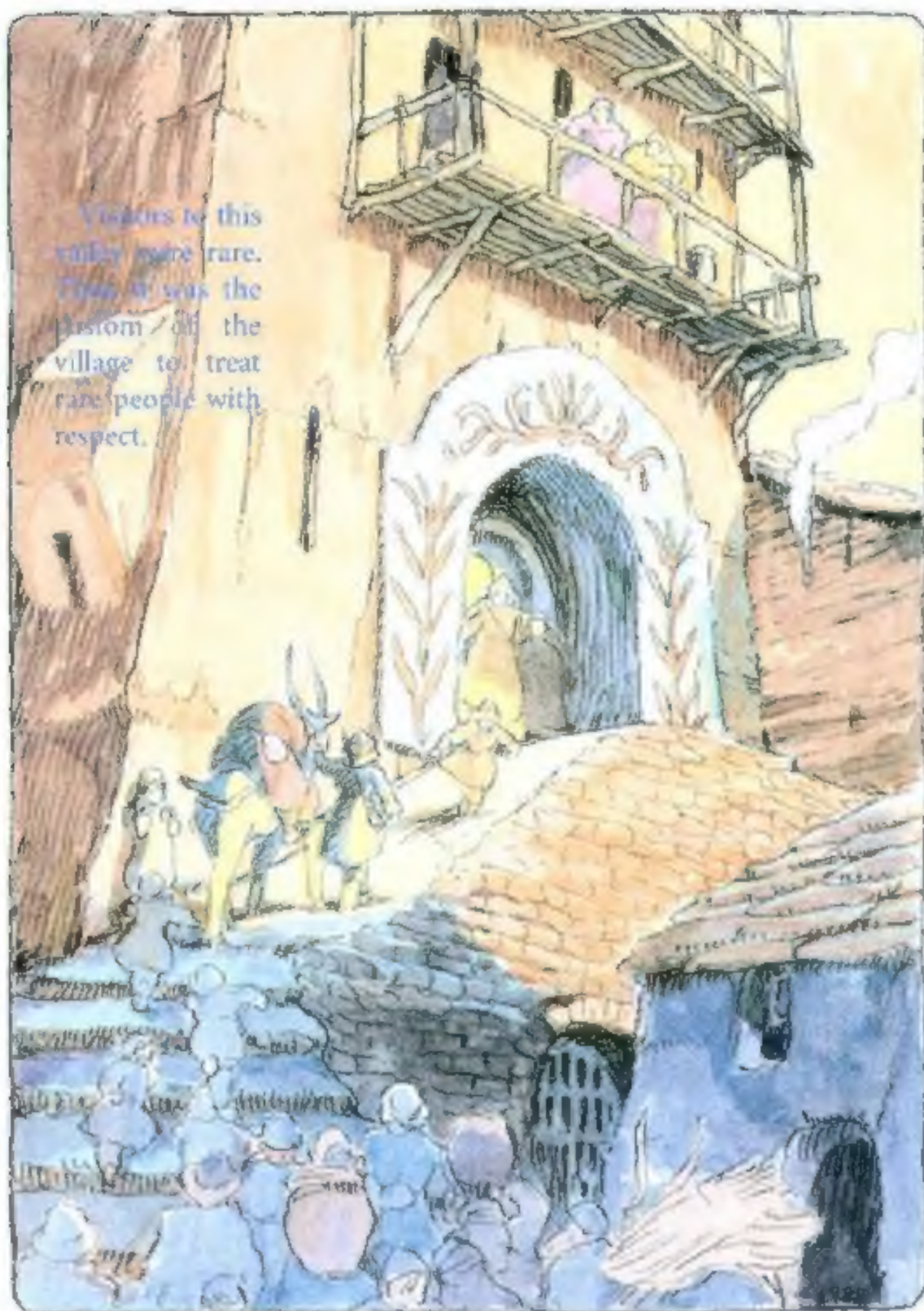
What beauti-
ful yet merciless
surroundings.

The boy's name
was Shuna... the one
to someday inherit
this kingdom from
his father.



A foreign man
in unfamiliar
garb lay dying
from weariness
and hunger.

Visitors to this
valley were rare.
From it was the
custom of the
village to treat
rare people with
respect.





Even the most effective spells and herbs of the old women of the valley couldn't save the traveler's life.

The traveler beckoned Shuna to his death bed. "I am the prince of a small country way to the east. The country was poor, and the people were always suffering from starvation."



The man then showed Shuna a small bag which was tied around his neck.

"When I was young like you, I met with a lone traveler."



Shima asked, "Your Mirvahu seeds are small and poor. Can we have these?"

"You can. But to sow these in the earth would be futile... These seeds have lost their shells... they're dead. He told me that living seeds of this kind are wrapped in a beautiful shiny golden shell..."

"I wished to experience the people's suffering for myself and set out on a journey to find these golden seeds..."

"But I am now old... my strength is gone..."

In the bag were seeds the like of which Shima had never seen.

"That traveler gave these to me. He said, with this grain, the people would be able to live happy and prosperous lives without the fear of going hungry..."

...but seeds were large and heavy.



Far to the west where the earth ends, there are rich, waving fields of the golden plants.



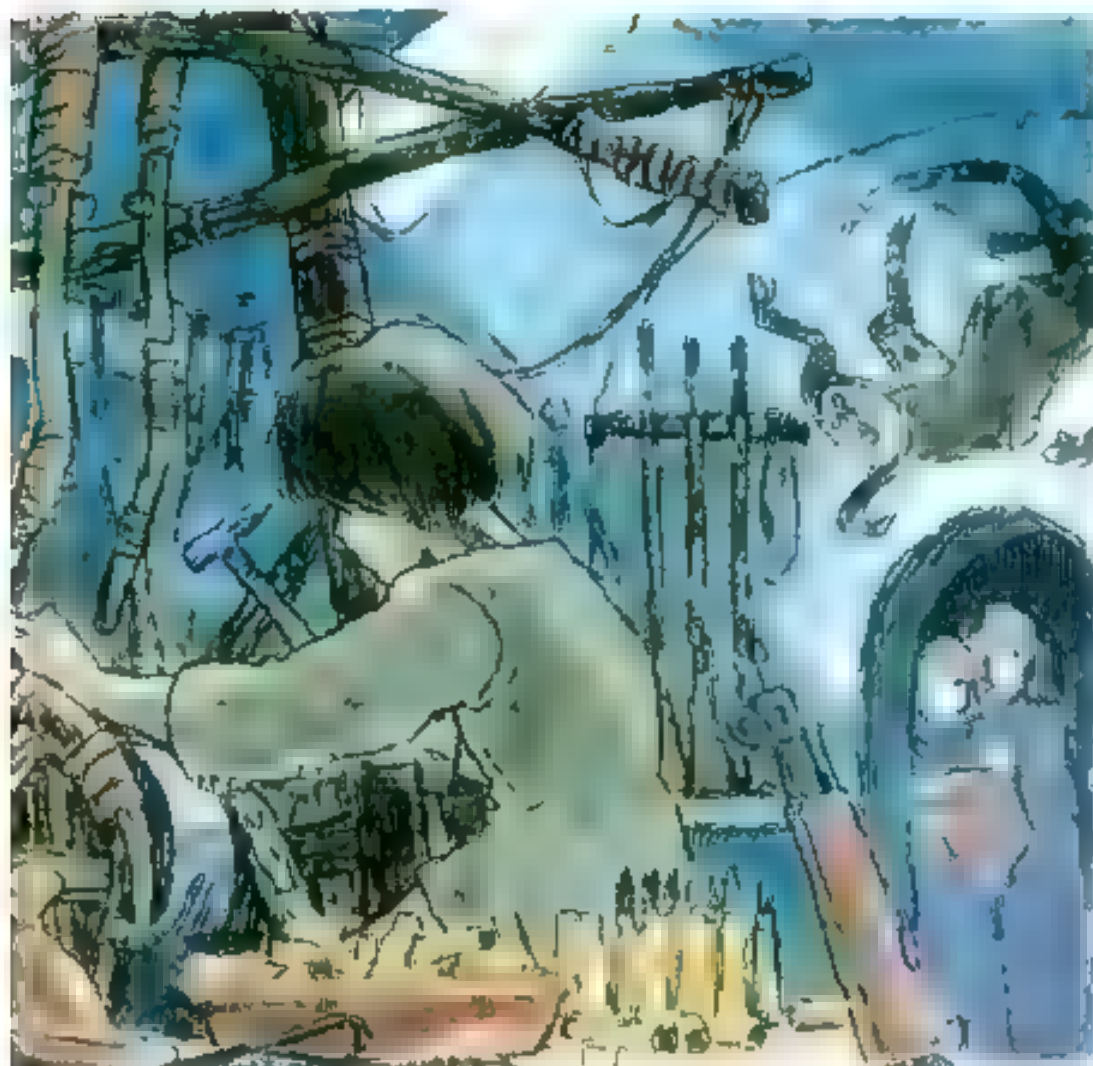


His father
and the elders
tried their best
to reason with
him

"We must
follow our
paths even if it
is our fate to be
poor, and allow
ourselves to be
laid to rest
here."



Not-
with-
standing
the time
had come
for depar-
ture
Nobody
could stop
the boy
the elders
gave out
deep sighs



The women
could see that
Shuna was
making far too
many bullets
for an ordinary
hunting trip
and knew that
his mind was
made up.







To the West

The wind became milder and peckmarked. The rust brown lakes stretched as far as the eye could see. The wind brought with it strange odorous smells. An after day Sima and Japku sat there without seeing a living thing.

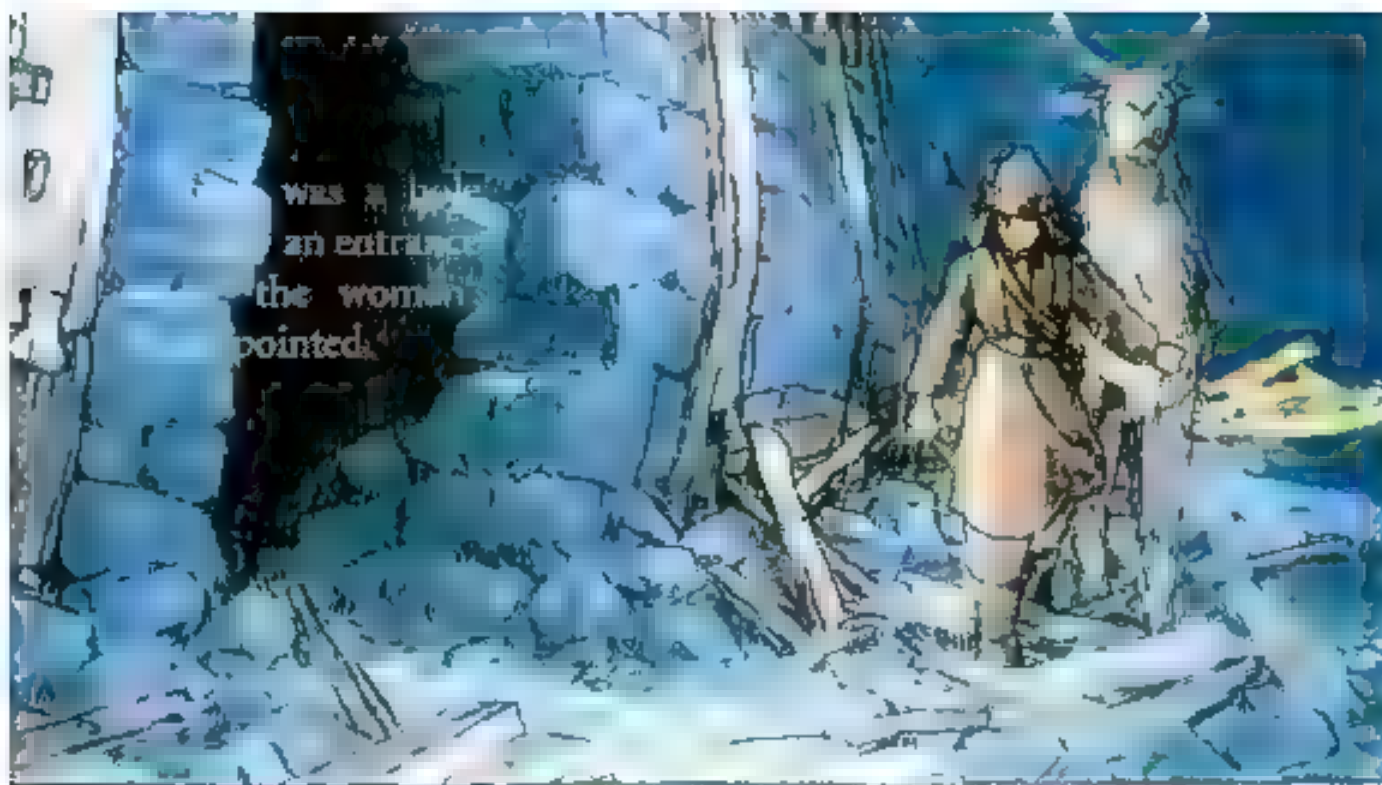






I AM A TRAVELER
DOWN ON HIS ^{LUCK} WICK.
COULD I TROUBLE YOU
FOR A NIGHT'S FOOD
AND SHELTER?

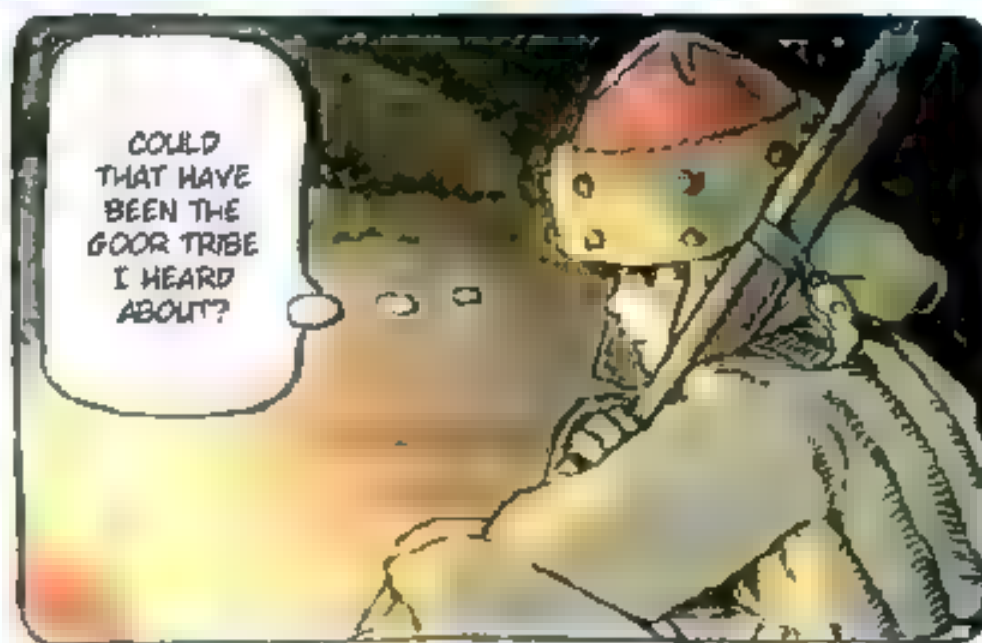




was a hole
an entrance
the woman
pointed.



He heard
grunching
dry sound
from
of his
fall.

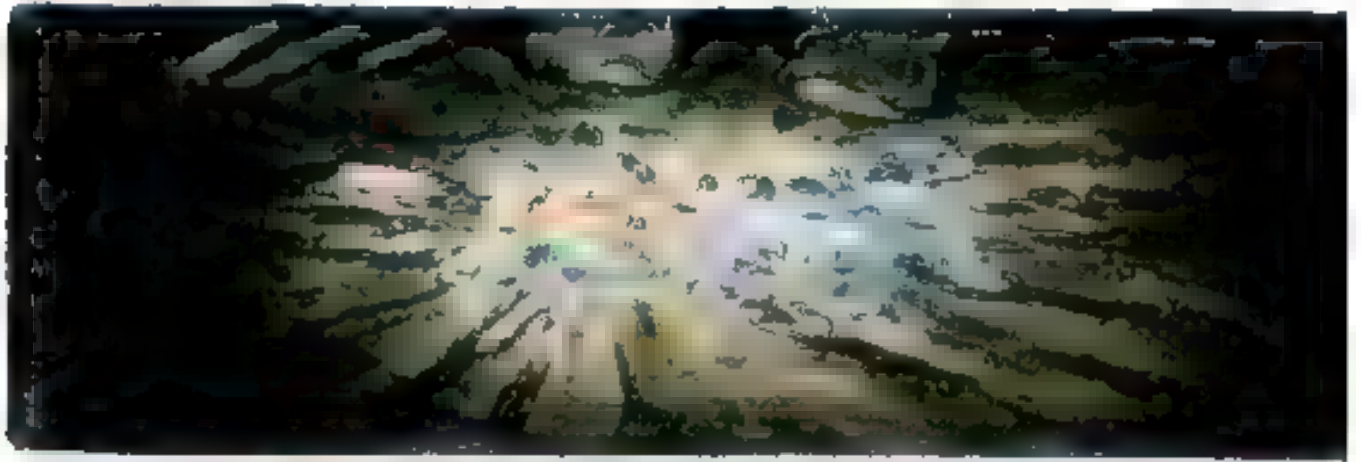


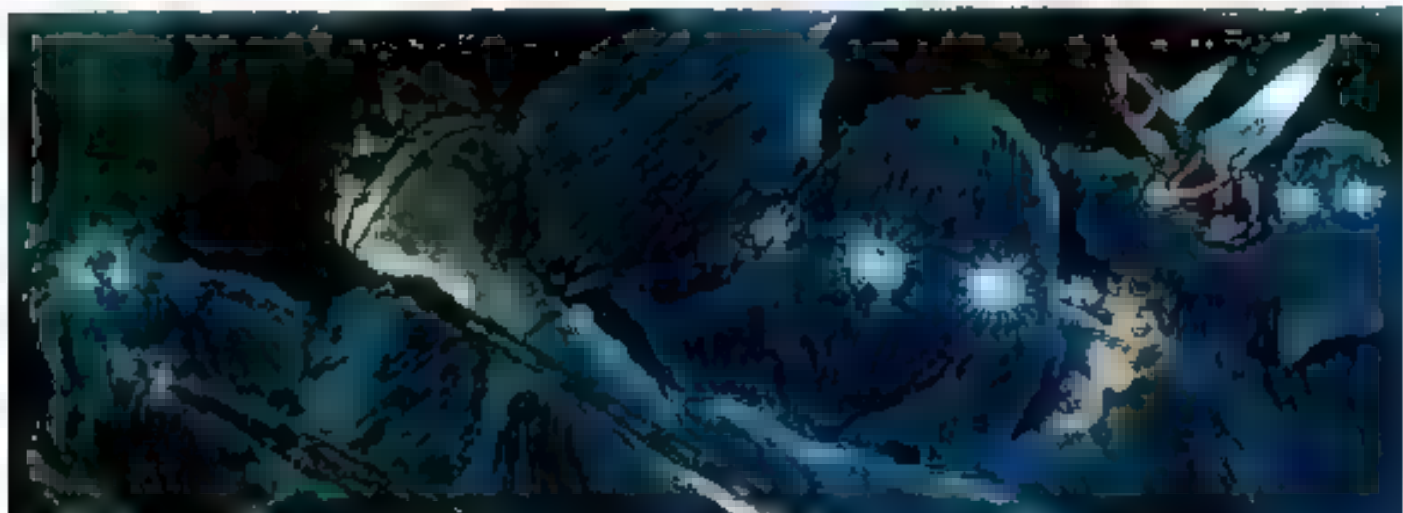
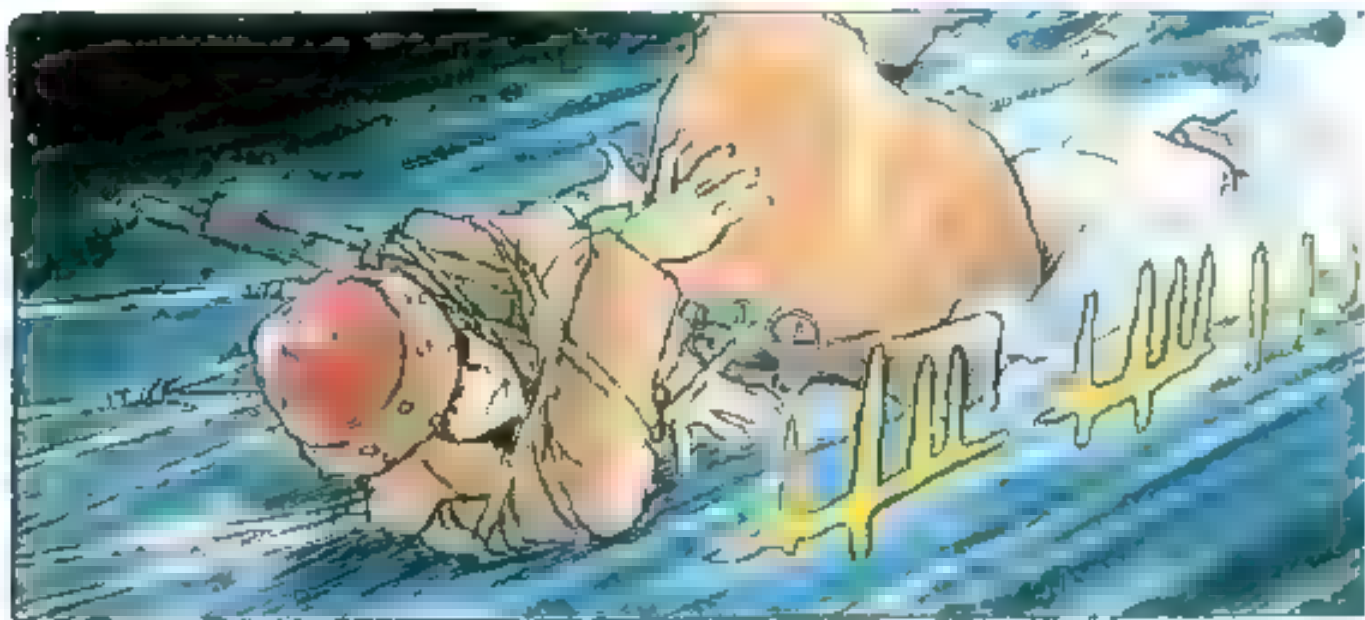
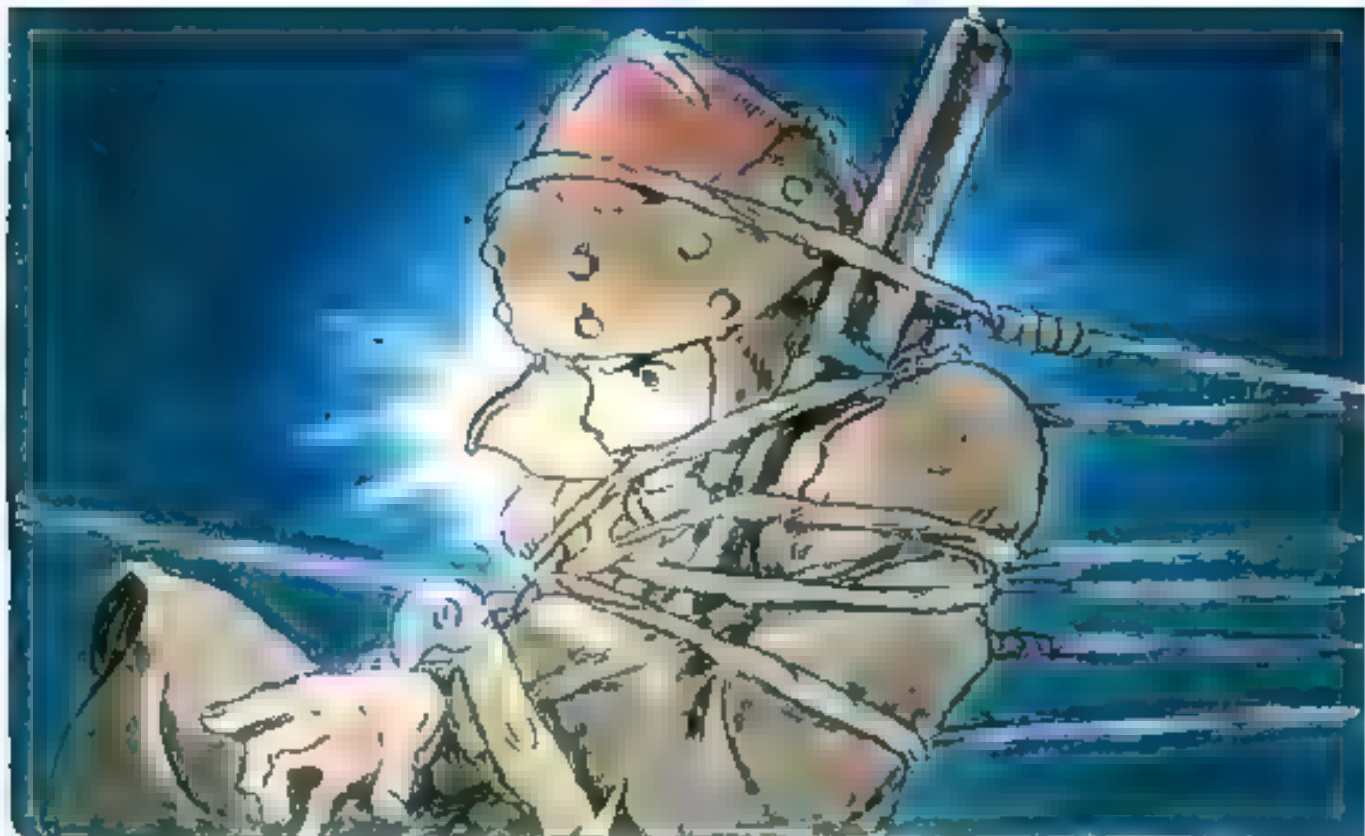
The mess of bones were plainly human. They had been burned, broken, and it looked as though the marrow had been sucked out.

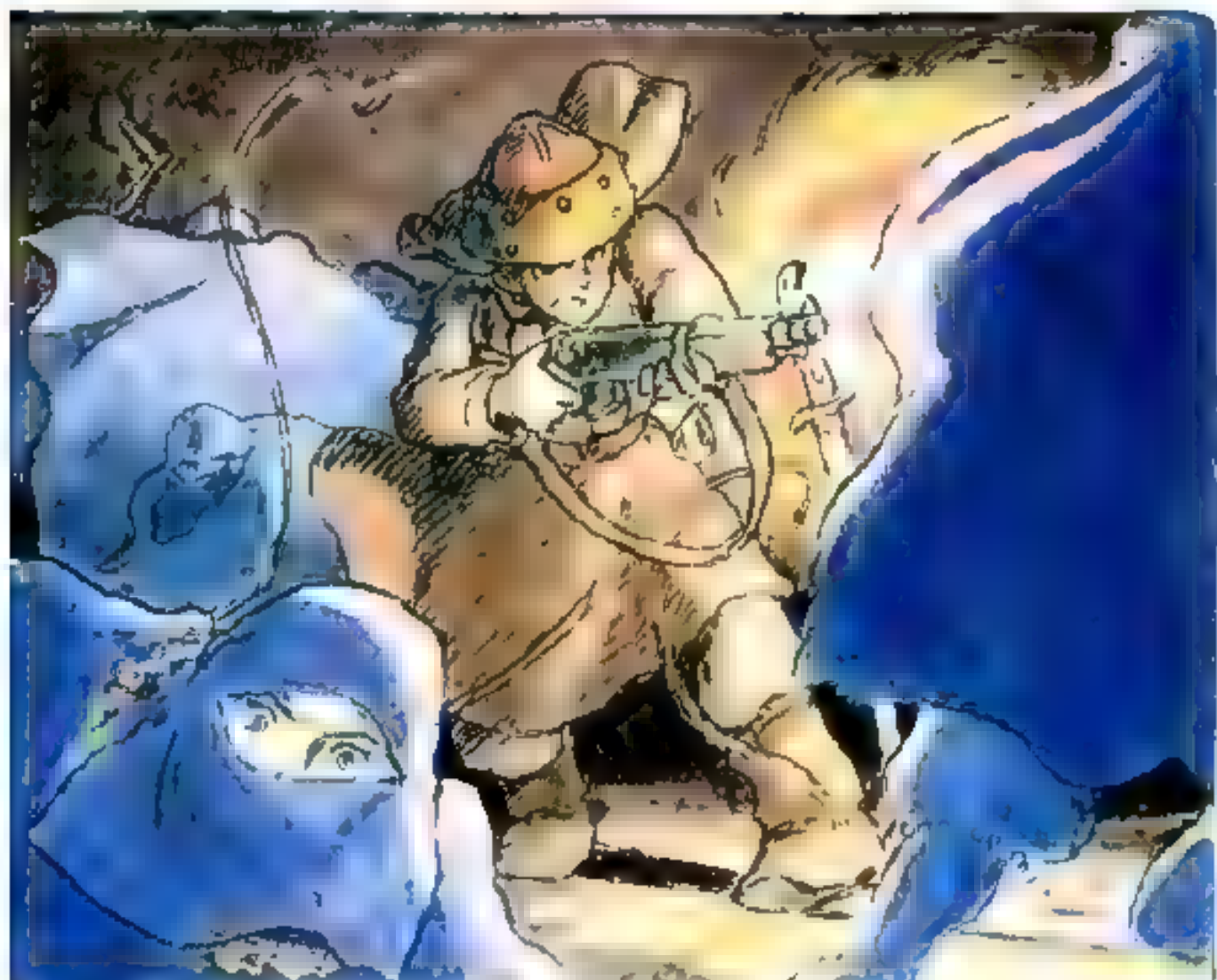
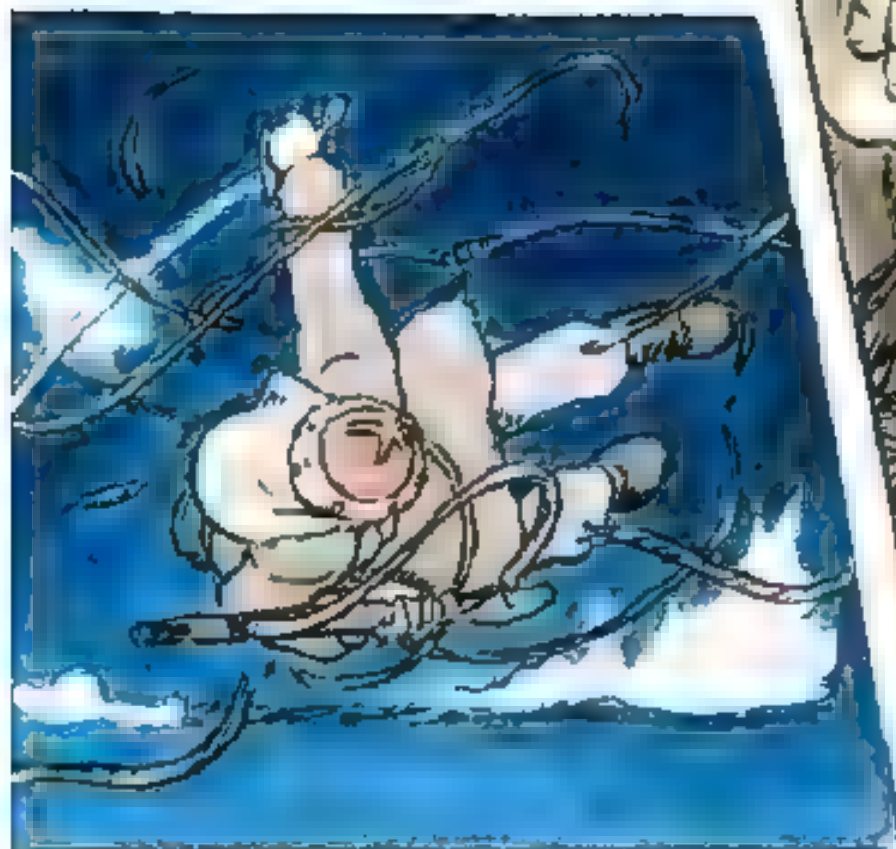
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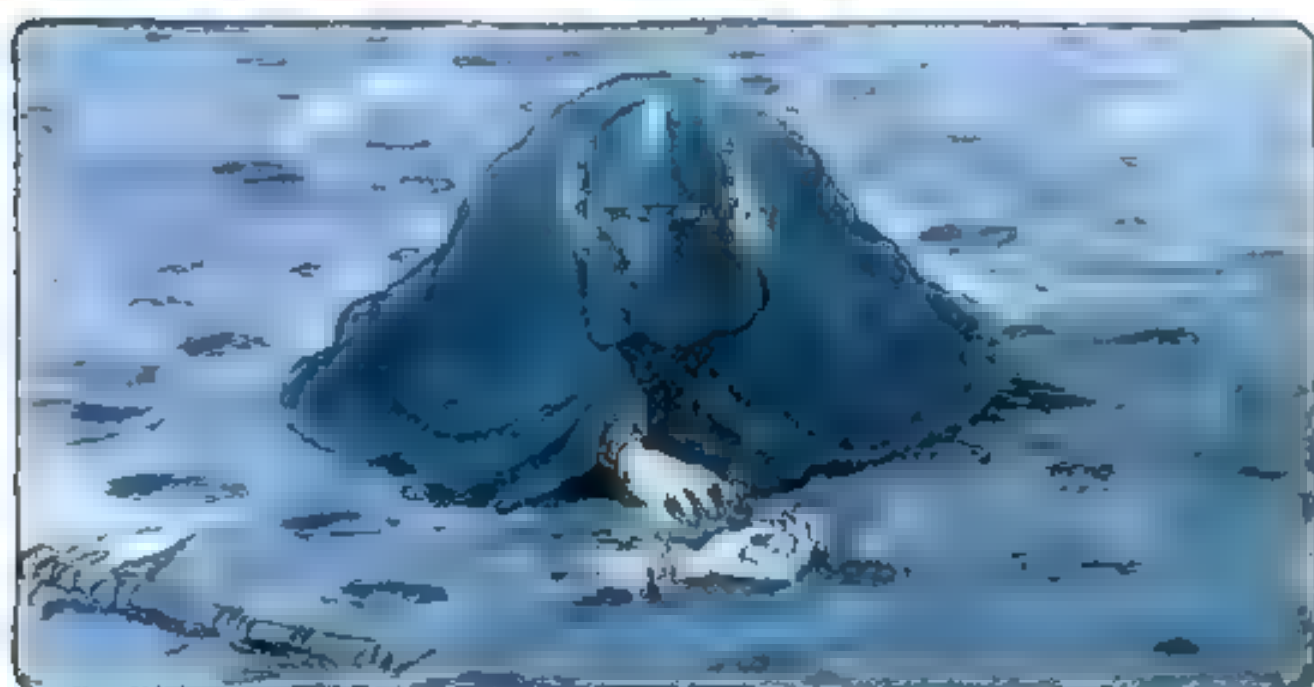






The attackers left
as suddenly as they
had come

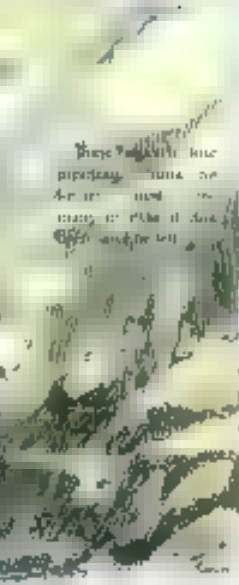
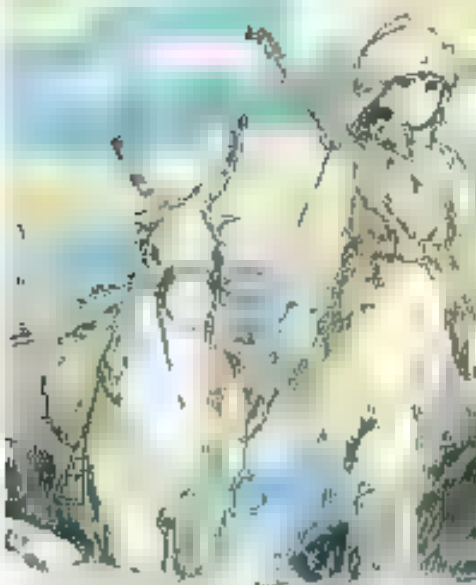




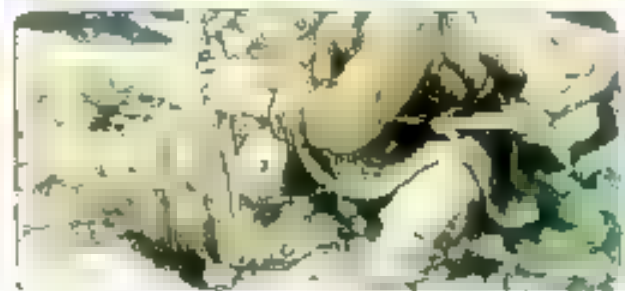
The supply of food brought from the village had run out. Shima and Yakkai were going hungry.



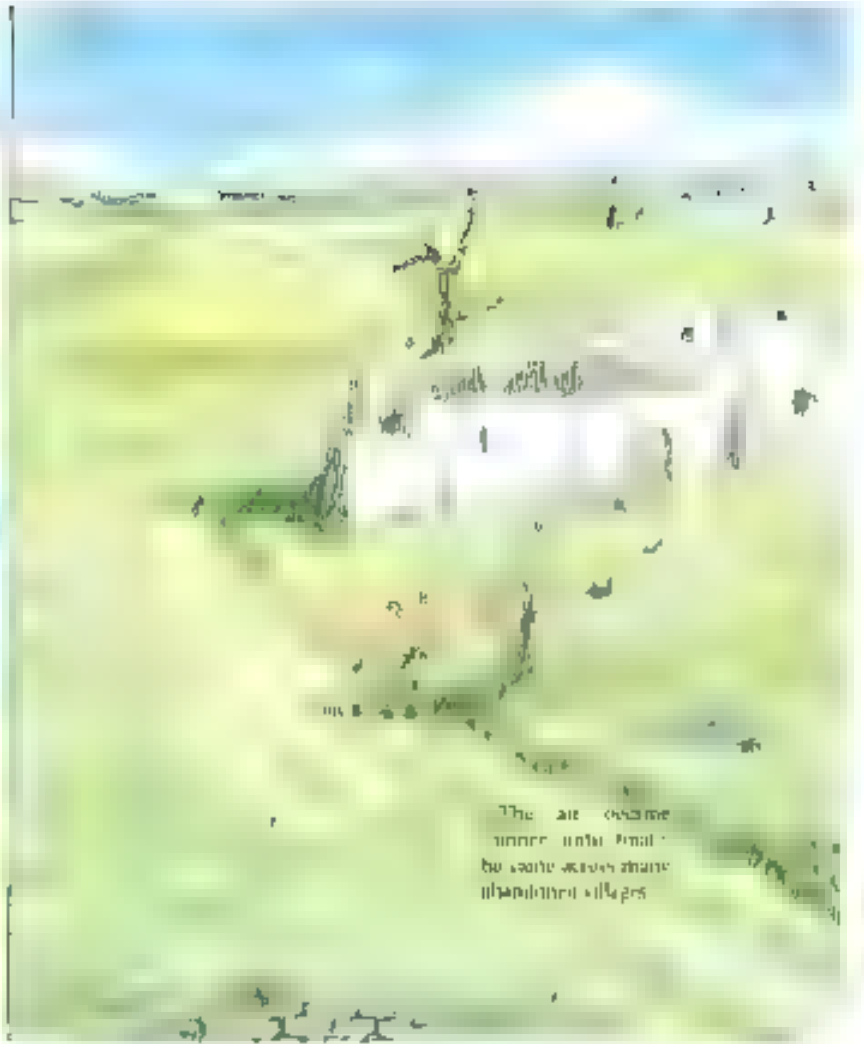
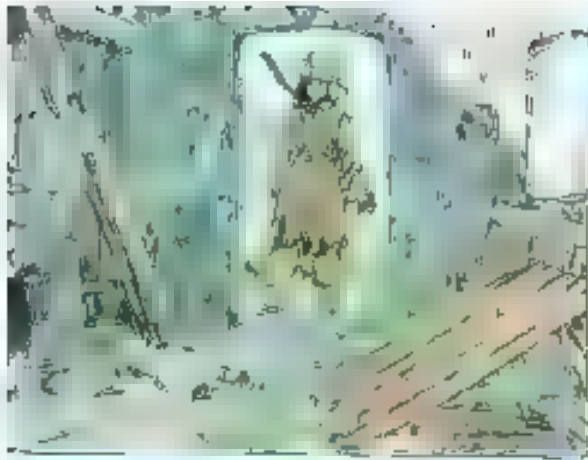
There was a big fire burning in the village. The fire was very big and many people were running away from it.



He talked to me.



He said to me, 'I am very happy to see you.' He said to me, 'I am very happy to see you.'



As they went even farther west they
passed by a large black head driven wagon
to make the road into a dirt road. But
the wagon was at the end of the road
cracked and broken. Aspen.

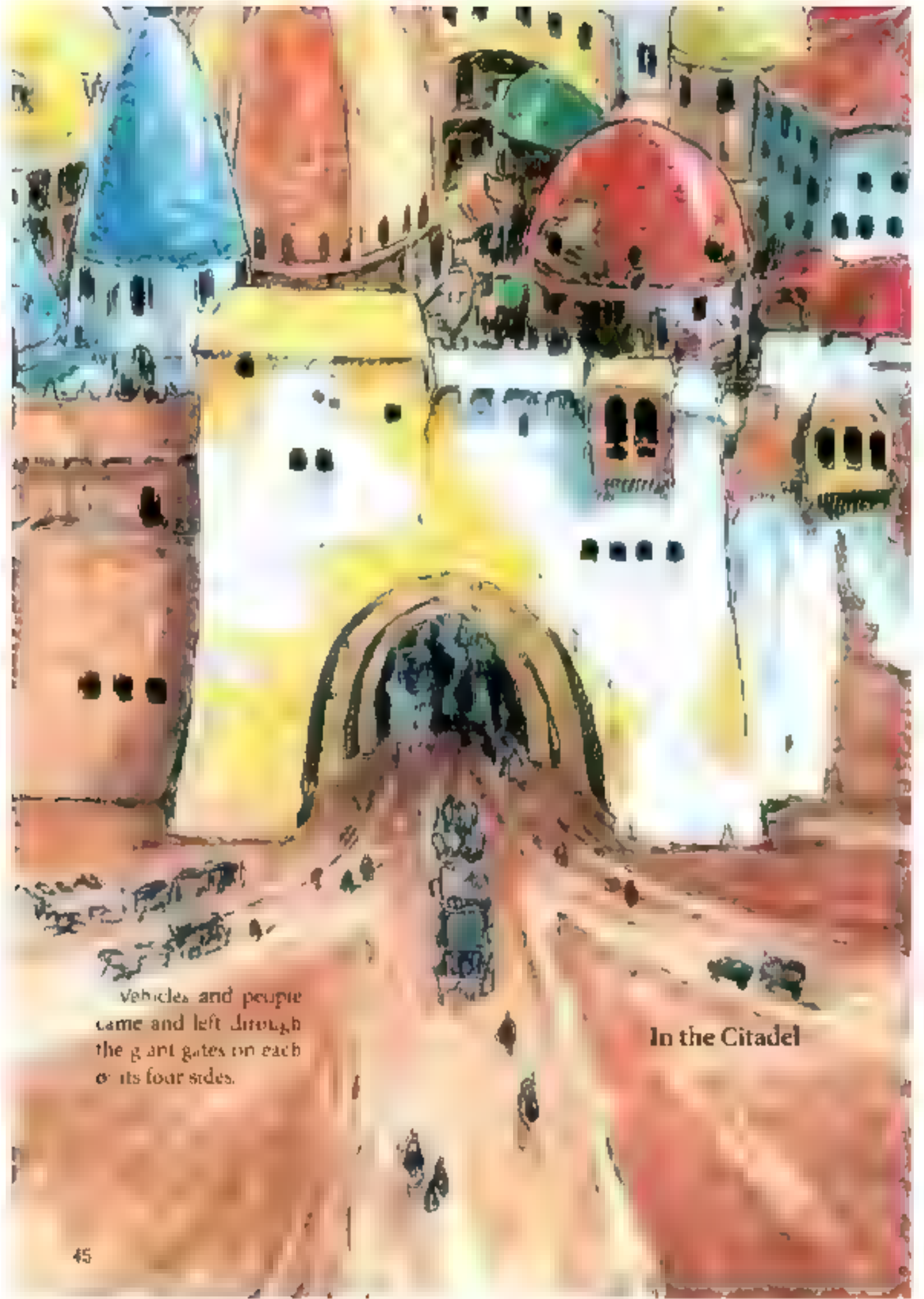
There was a small wheel coming from the
ground of wagon. The wagon was broken,
Shima never a disk.





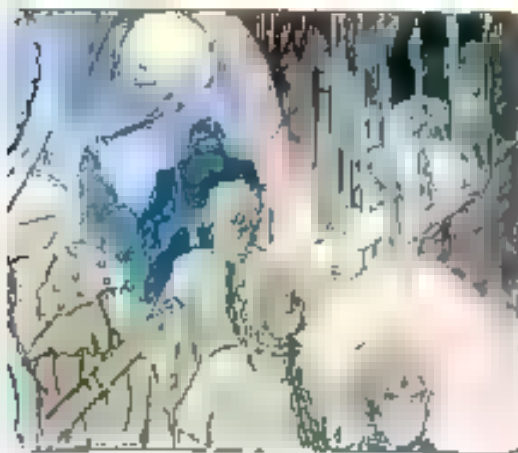
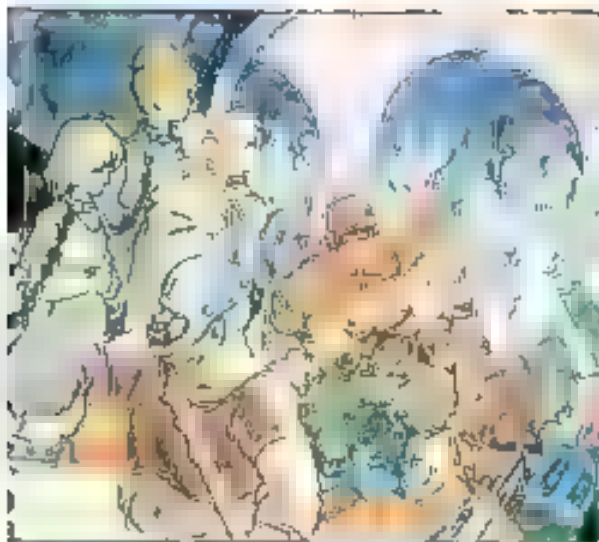
After passing many
similar wagons, a city
upon a bare plain
came into sight.



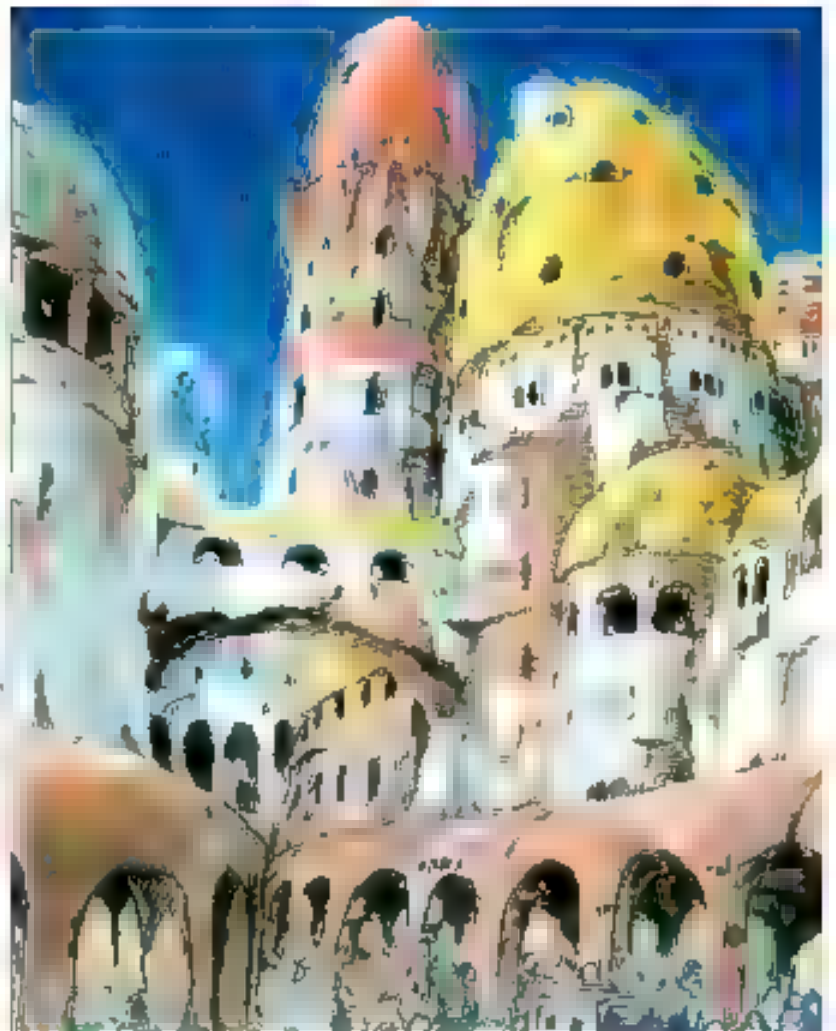


Vehicles and people
came and left through
the giant gates on each
of its four sides.

In the Citadel



How far
this be
The peak
in fact in
the 1
side like



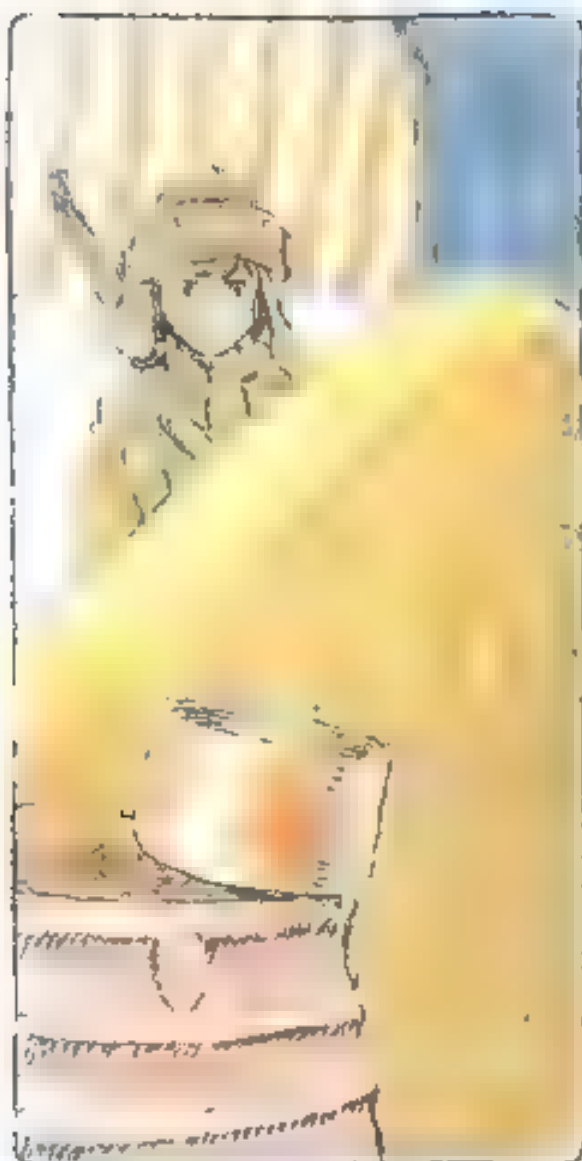
The seeds I am looking for can't possibly be in a place like his.



'I'll leave just as soon as I can buy food.



The merchant's behavior towards him changed abruptly as Shuna showed him his jewel encrusted knife. Mountains of seed, bean and threshed, stood at the front of the shop.



Shuna's eyes singled out one pile. They were the seeds he was searching for! ...but they had all been threshed, and so they were all dead. Shuna asked the merchant whether he had any living seed.

"No one is left to tend fields. We get the wheat we need from somewhere else."

"Then can you tell me where this wheat comes from?"

"The slave dealers exchange their wares for it. Go ask them."

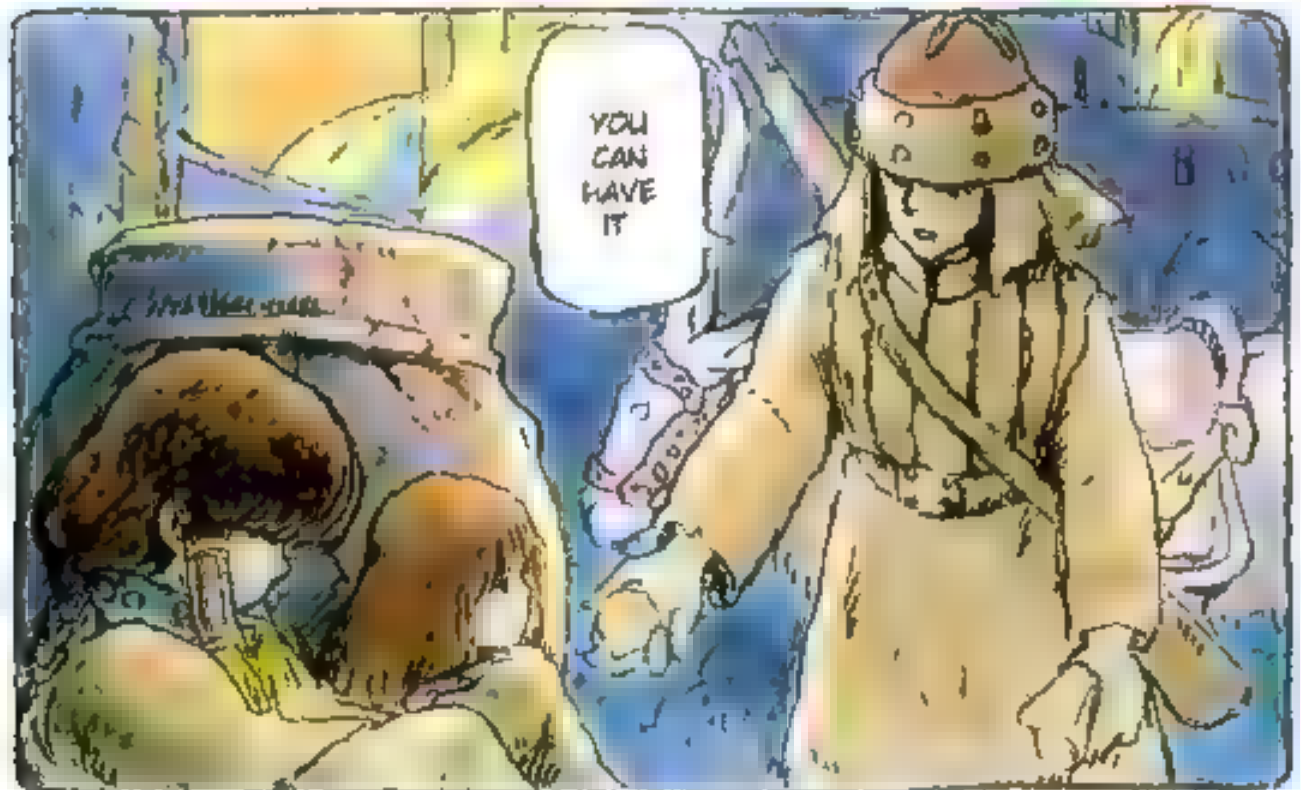
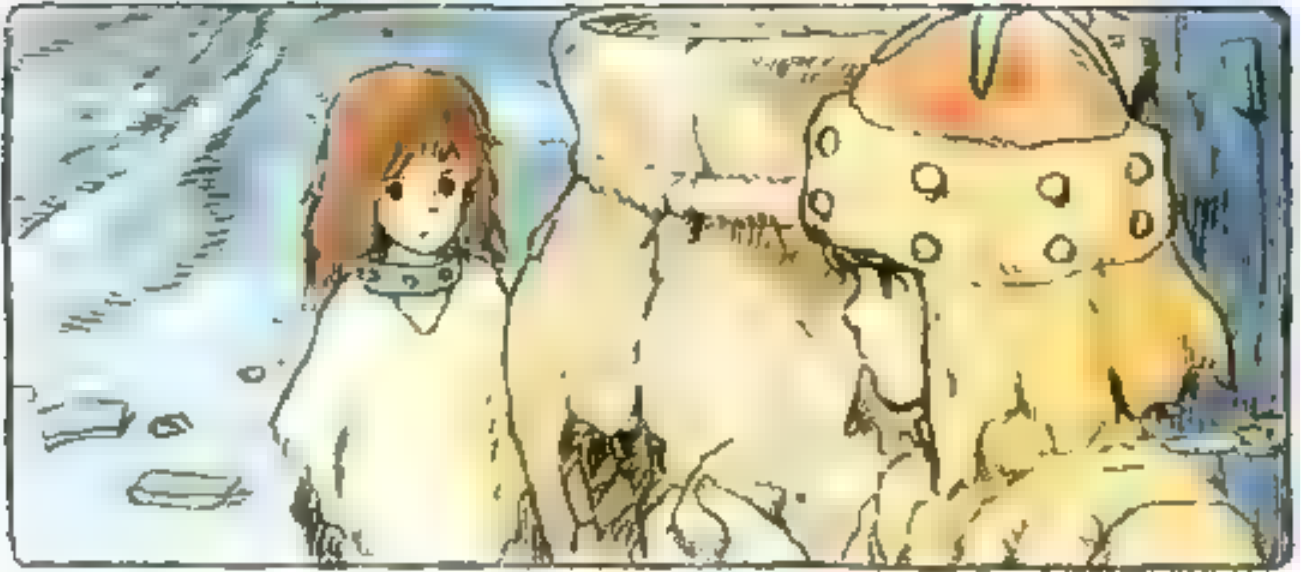


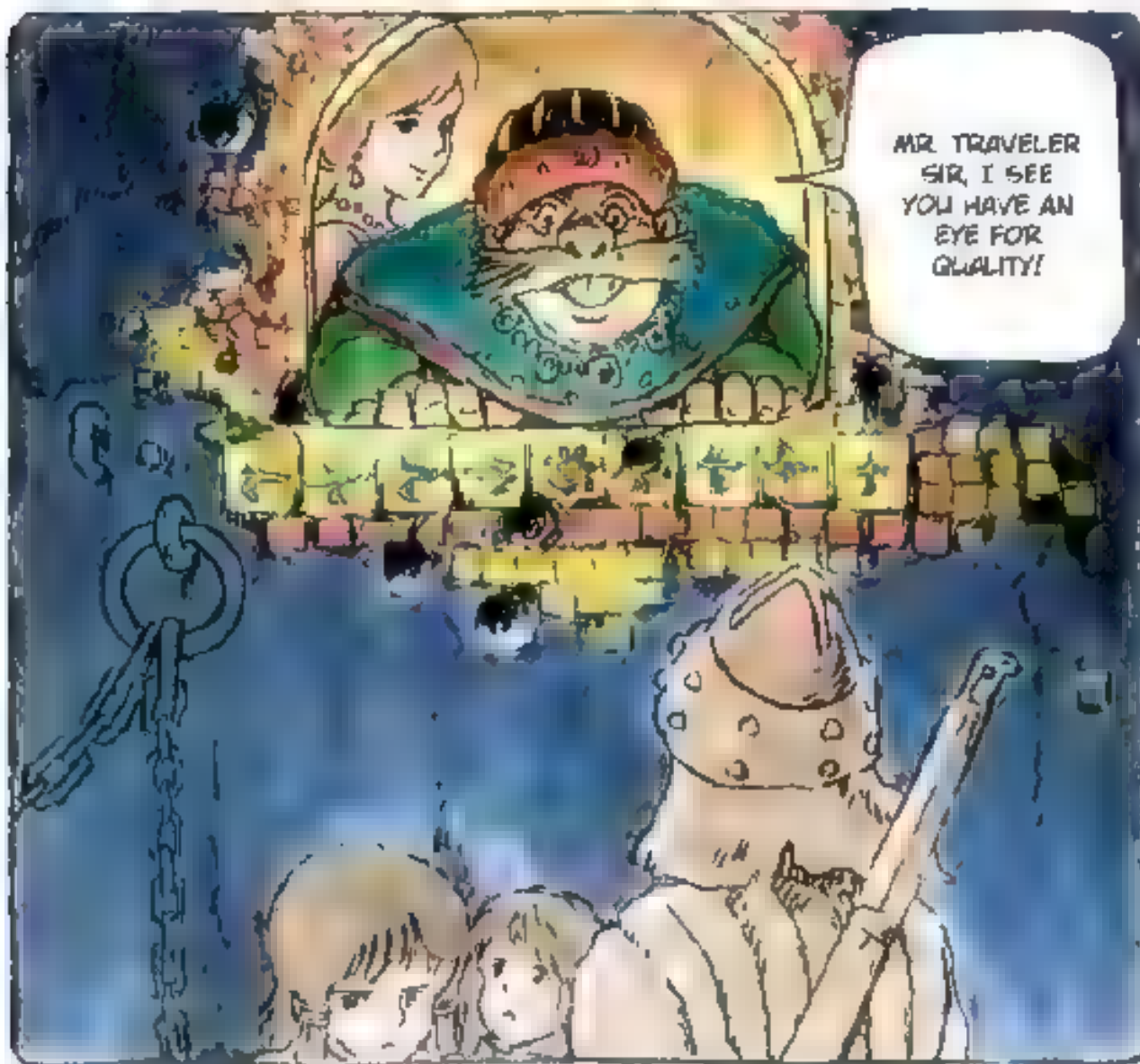
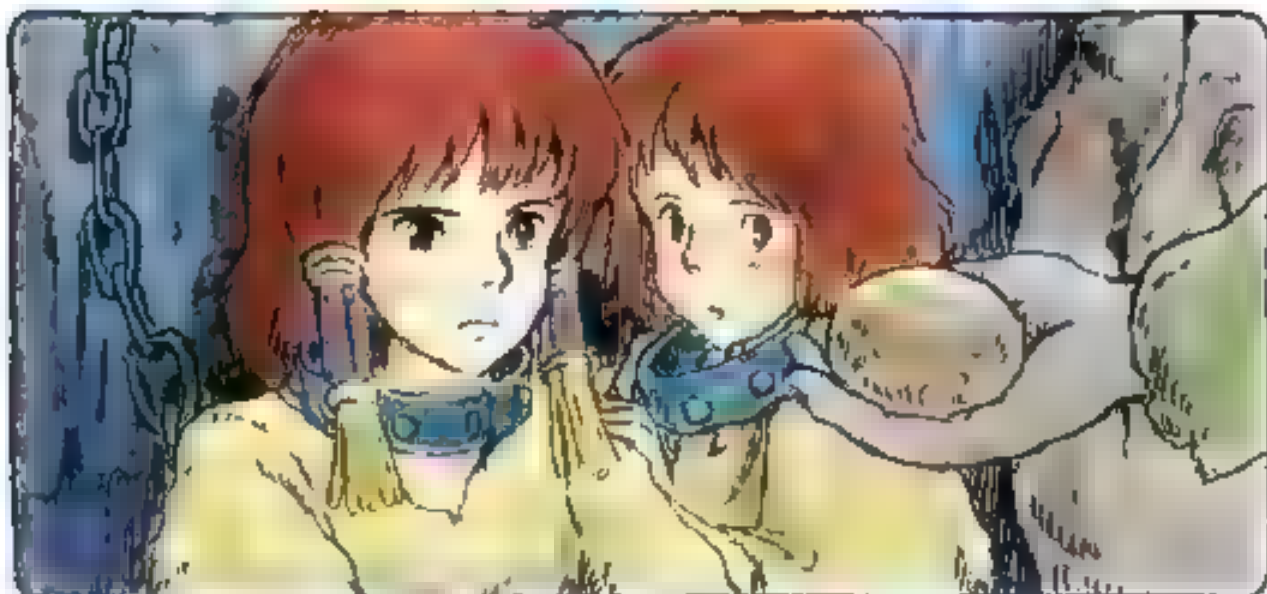
The men's
lips were sealed
with a steel wall
of hostility.



Shane
was worn

1983





YOU COULD
TAKE THEM
AS WIVES OR
AS CHAMBER-
MAIDS. I'LL
LET THEM GO
CHEAP, JUST
FOR YOU.



THESE TWO
SISTERS ARE
DESCENDED
FROM
ROYALTY.

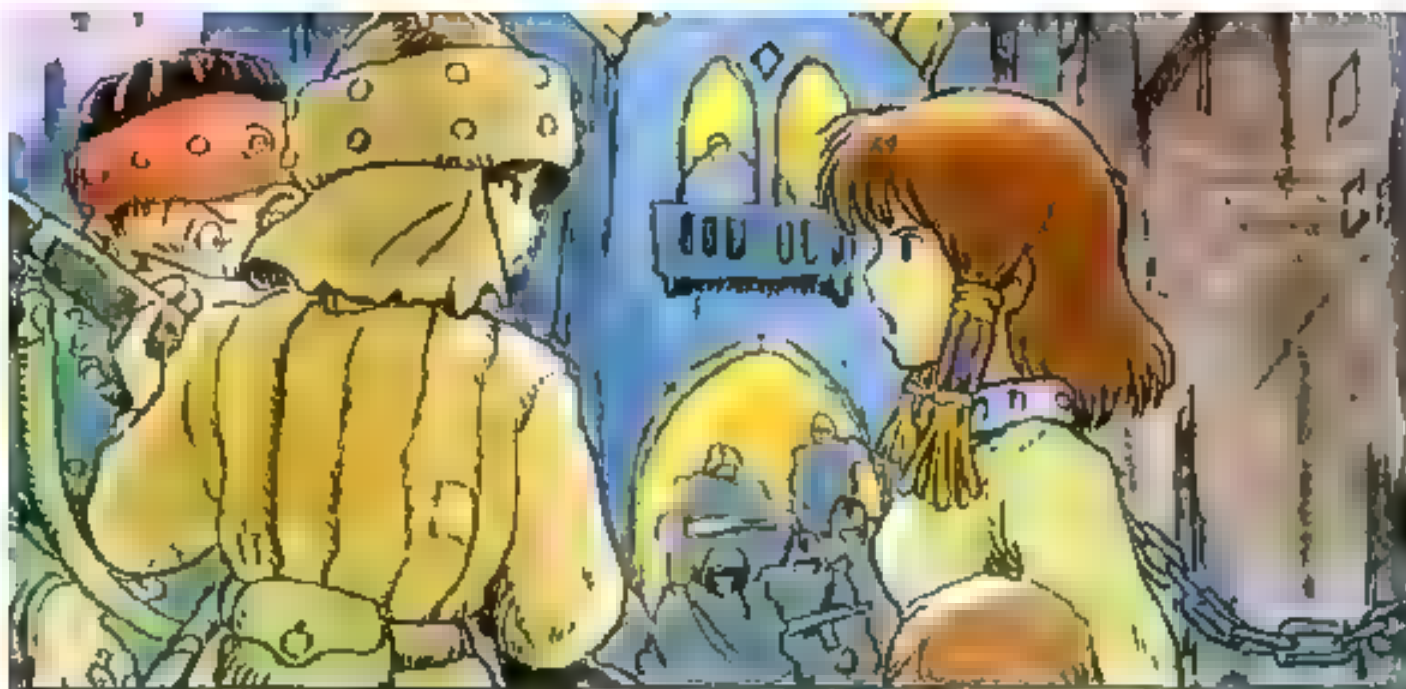
"If I could only set them free!",
Shuna tormented himself

But if he let go of Yakkul, his
journey would be over. He had
already used up his precious
stones.

And I could also
use a sword and a shield
for you, if you like.

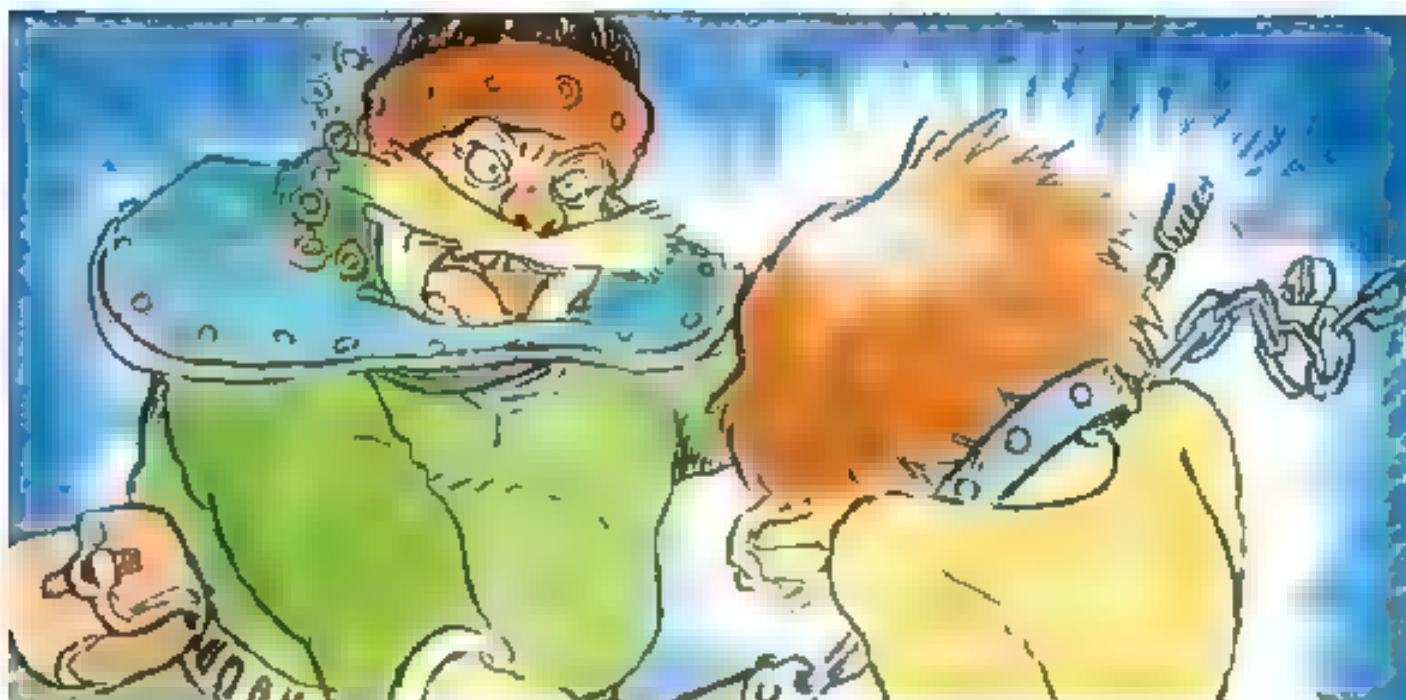


HOW ABOUT THIS
THEN? YOU SEEM TO
BE ATTACHED TO THAT
OLD MUSKET, BUT I'D
BE WILLING TO TRADE
IT FOR THEM.



WE ARE NOT
DESCENDED
FROM ROYALTY,
AND BESIDES, WE
DON'T WANT TO
BE BOUGHT,
EVEN BY YOU!

IF YOU GIVE
UP YOUR
WEAPON, YOU
TOO WILL BE
HUNTED DOWN
IN TIME.

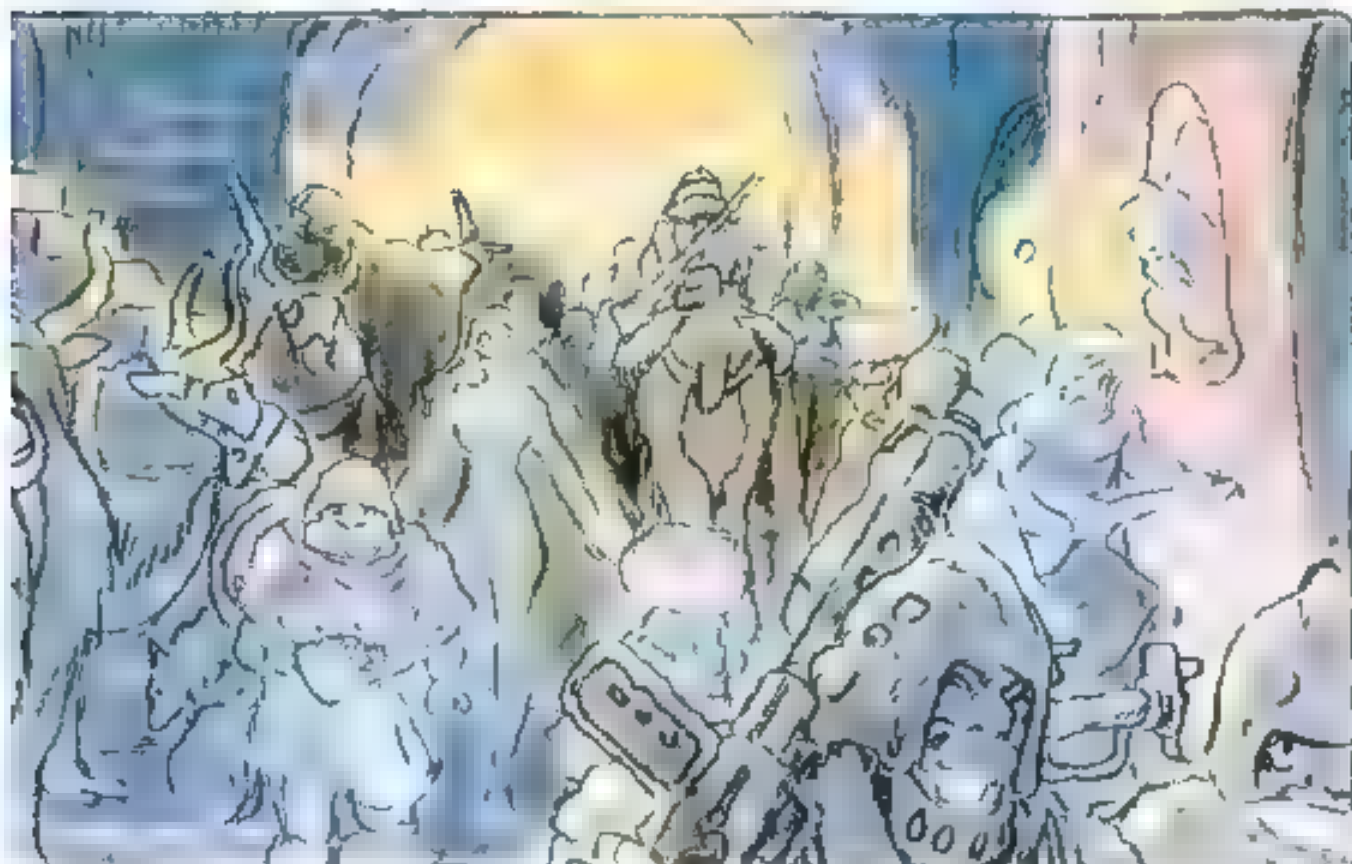




STAY
THERE AND
DON'T MAKE
A FUSS,
UNLESS YOU
HAVE A
DEATHWISH.



OFF WITH
YOU THEN, YOU
JINGOLITH RASCAL,
OR WOULD YOU
RATHER I DEMON-
STRATE TO YOU
HOW PRETTILY SHE
CAN SCREAM?



All of a sudden
he felt hot tears
streaming down
his face

No amount of
wiping would stop
them



OH, A FIRE!
WOULD YOU MIND
AWFULLY SHARING IT WITH
A TIRED OLD MAN CHILLED
TO THE BONE?







THEN YOU SHOULD
SIMPLY TURN AROUND
AND RETURN TO YOUR
HOMELAND RIGHT NOW,
BACK TO A LIFE WHERE
YOU ARE DAMPERED
LIKE A PRINCE...



GIVE UP ON
YOUR SILLY
YELLOW
SEEDS.

OUCH
...



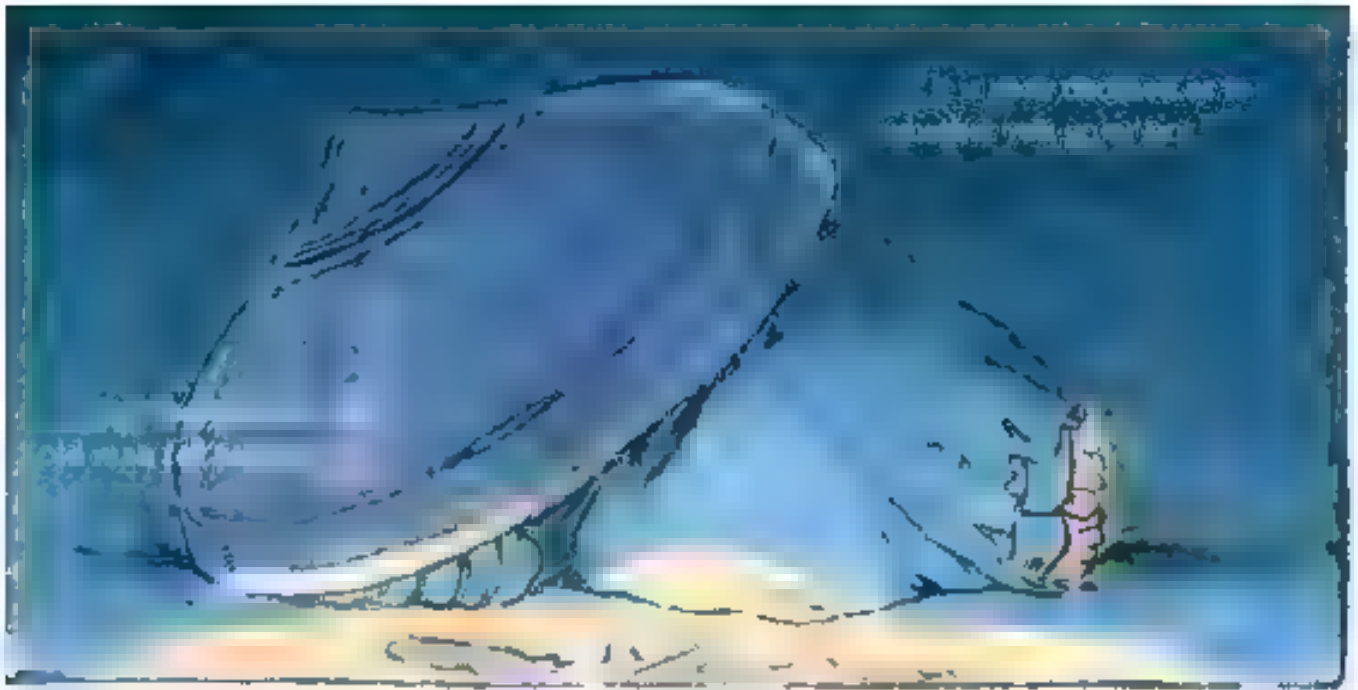


"Go farther west. The land
will eventually end in a precipice. Beyond that lies the place
of the god men, where the moon
is born and returns to die."

"God men?"

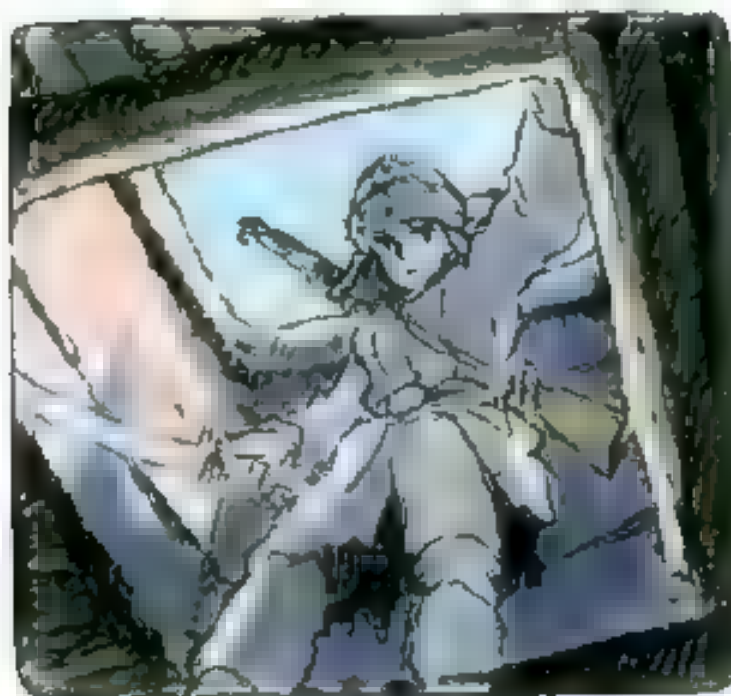
"Once, man had the golden seeds. It was
something that man harvested, sowed, and
brought to life, but now only the god men have
it. Now, man sells out fellow man to the god men
for dead seed."

"The god men don't welcome the presence of
man. No-one that has ever gone to their land has
returned."



Shuna retraced his steps to the citadel - fat with sleep - securely inside of its thick bolted gates. He scaled the walls and returned to the street he had been in the day before, but the only things he found were the chains still fastened to the wall. The sisters were gone.

The Raid



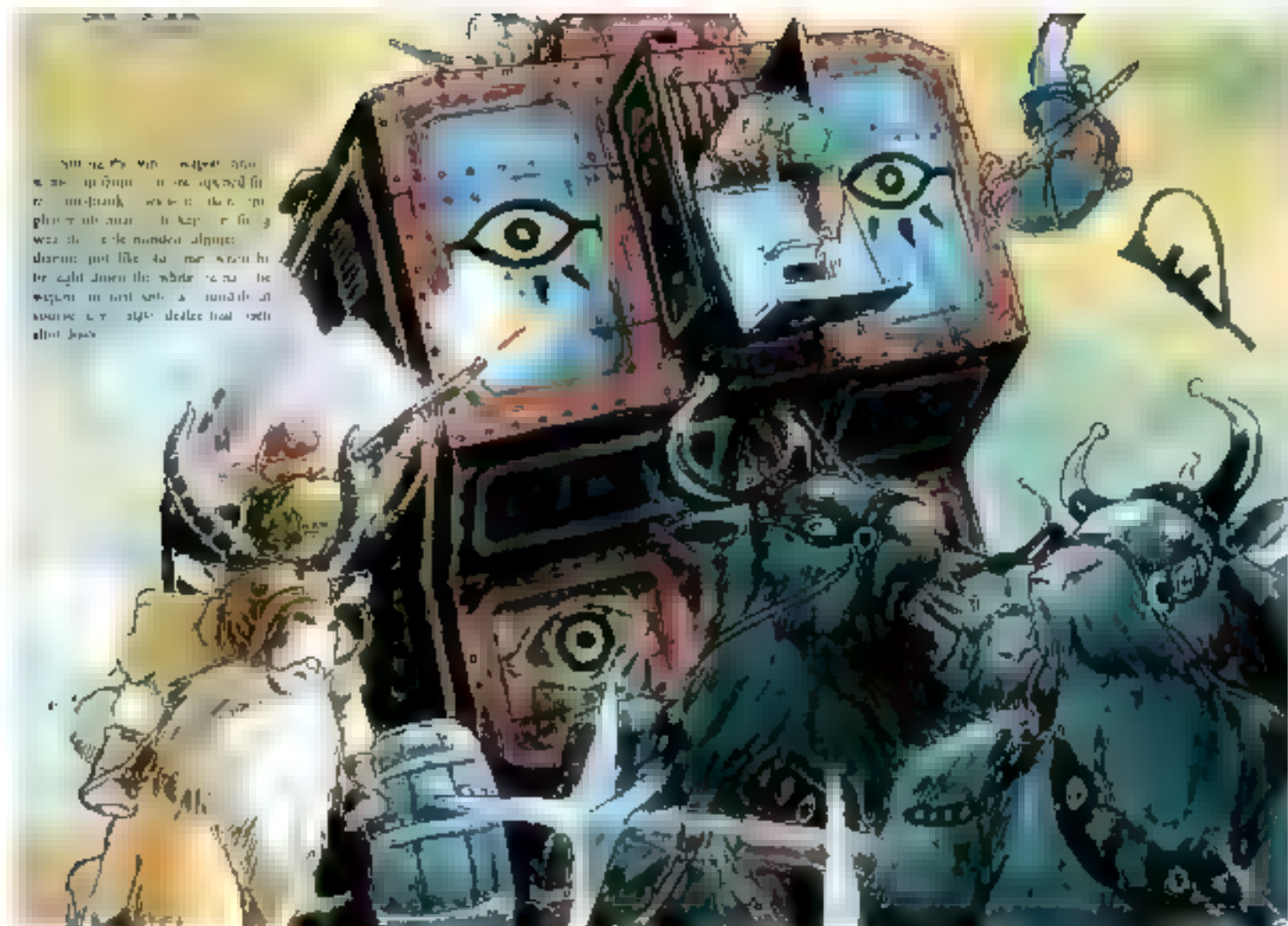


Shuna felt the
swell of violent
energy coursing
through his body.

Like the wind, Yakkul
opened pursuit south-
wards.



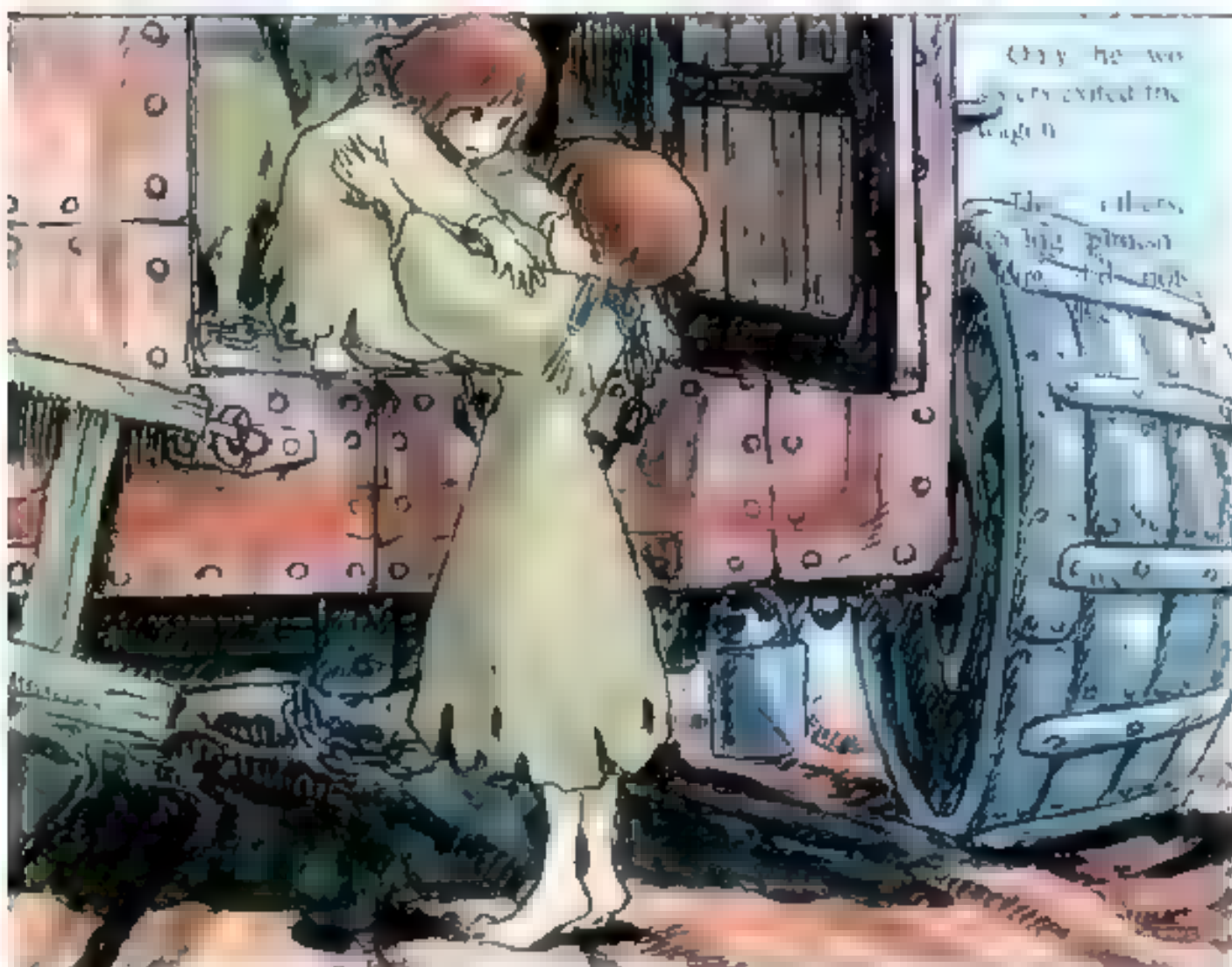
And the first thing I saw
was a big, old, rusty metal
box with a face on it. The
face was made of metal
plates and had a big, wide
mouth and a pair of eyes
that looked like they were
made of glass. The box was
the size of a small house
and it was standing on four
legs. It was the first thing
I saw when I stepped out
of the cave. It was the first
thing I saw when I stepped
out of the cave.





Shuna found the ring of keys and opened the iron door

"Anyone who wishes to be free, though it means a life time of pursuit, come out now!"



Only he who
has ever exited the
cage is

The others
in this prison
are still not

'You
shunned
against
having
your
freedom
bought
for you.
You
fought
proudly
for your
freedom,
and now
you are
free!'



There was no time for
further talk as the forms of
pursuers from the citadel
appeared on the horizon.
"Let's go!", Shuay boosted
the two onto the saddle







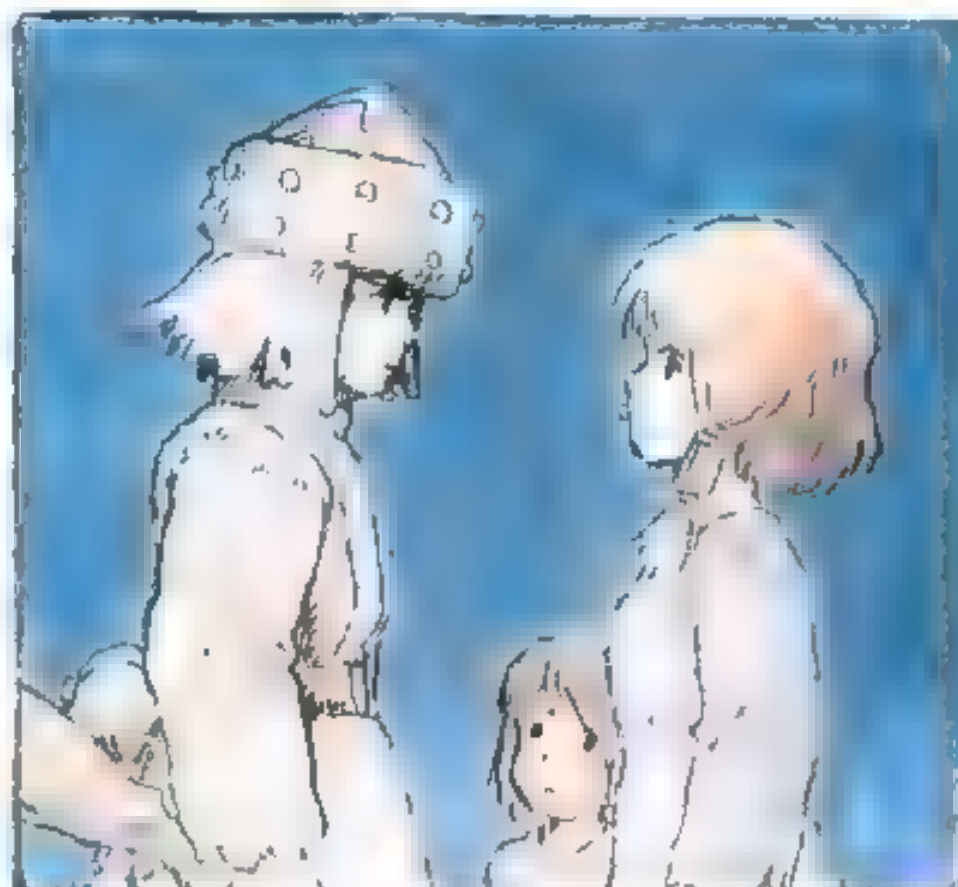
Yakkul displayed fantastic fleetness of foot for a creature of his size, laden with three people as he made for the west. The pursuers were eventually lost from their field of vision. However, Shuna realized that he was dealing with hardened trackers who were not making the effort to hurry.

Yakka collapsed into a sit, leaning at the mouth. If he were to carry the three any far her, he would surely die.



"Yakkul can still run with just the two of you. I will stay here to hold them off."

When the girl protested that they must stay too, Shuna insisted, "Once I've taken care of the trackers, I plan to head straight to the land of the god men."



Knowing the reason for his journey, the girl cast her eyes to the ground. She finally lifted her gaze, "If you return from there, please keep heading north. We will be waiting for you there always."

The girl's name, she finally confessed, was Thea. Shuna gave her half of his food and water.

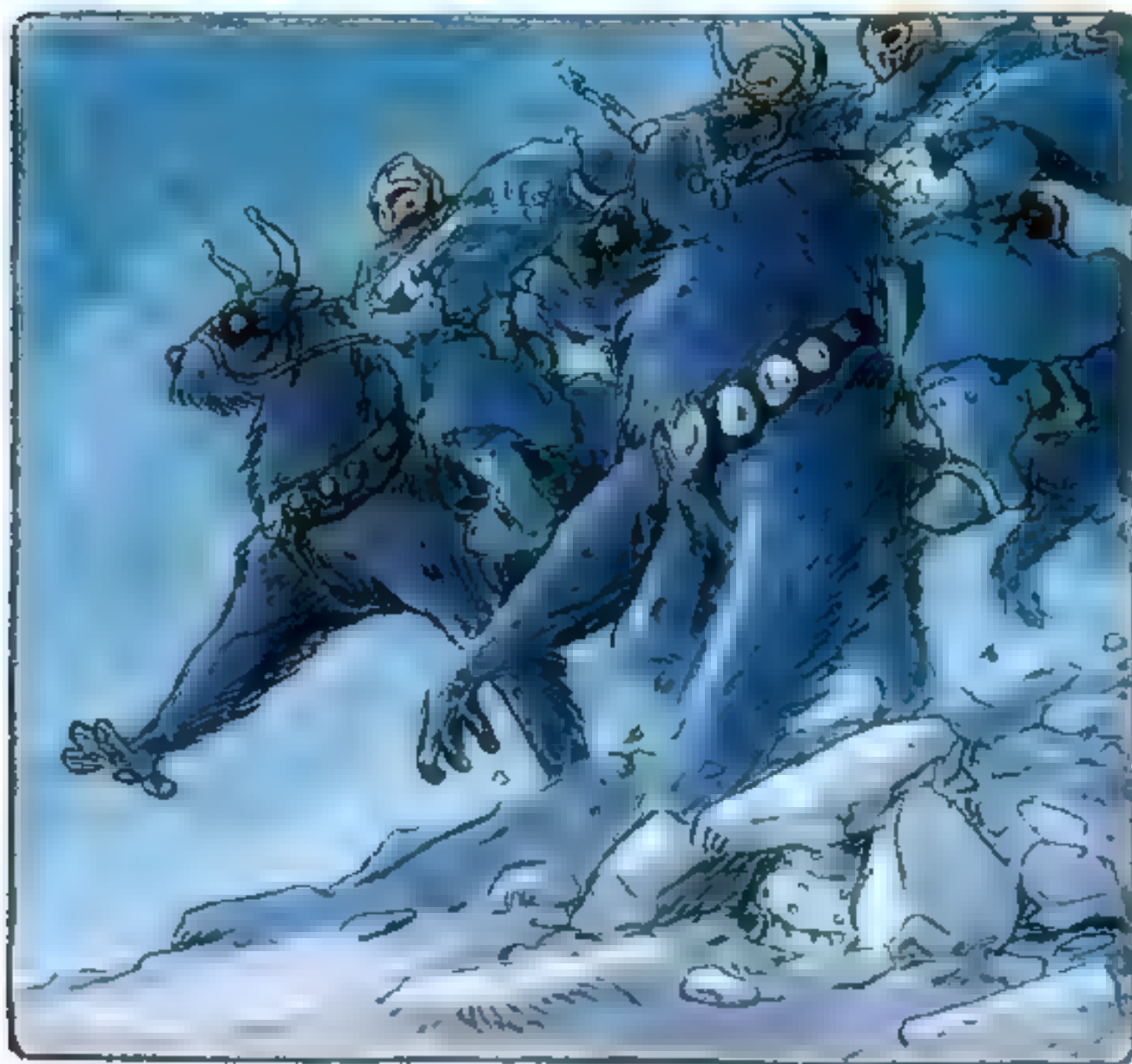
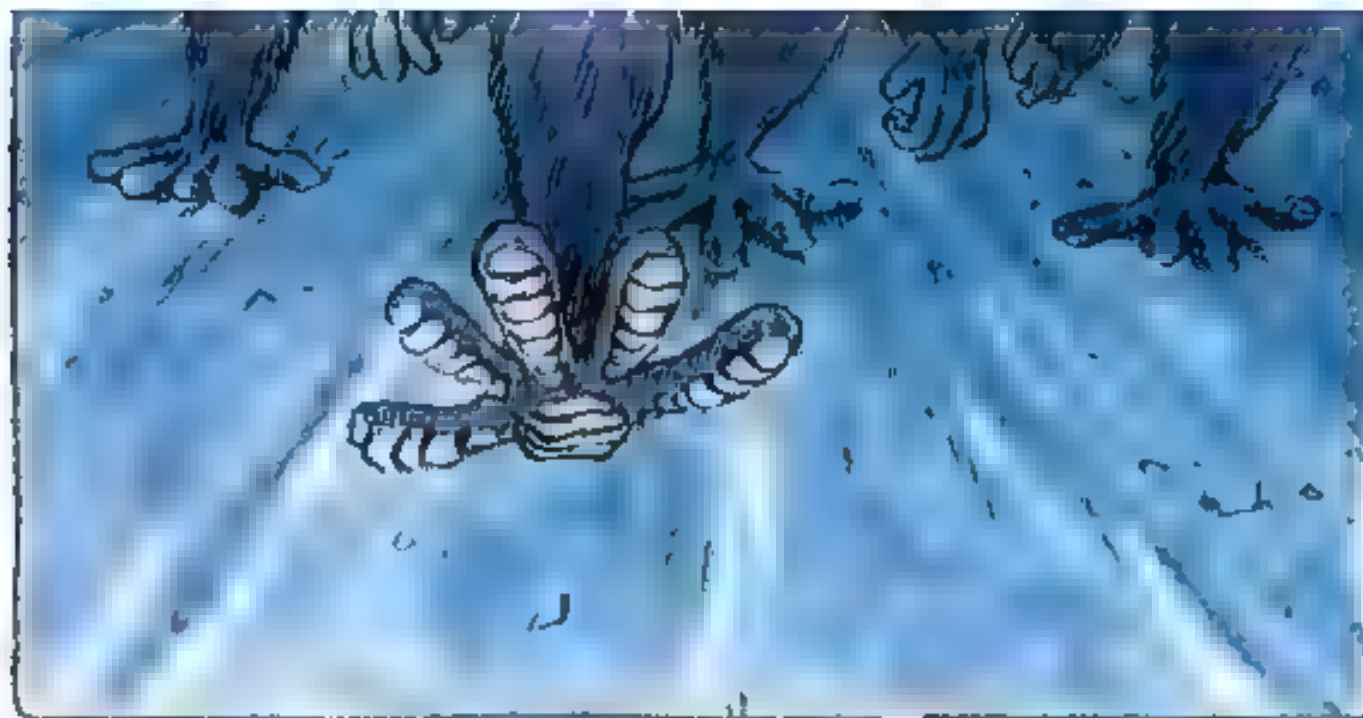
The time had come for him to take his leave. Thea and her tiny little sister stopped and waved once, and then vanished swiftly into the north without another backward glance.

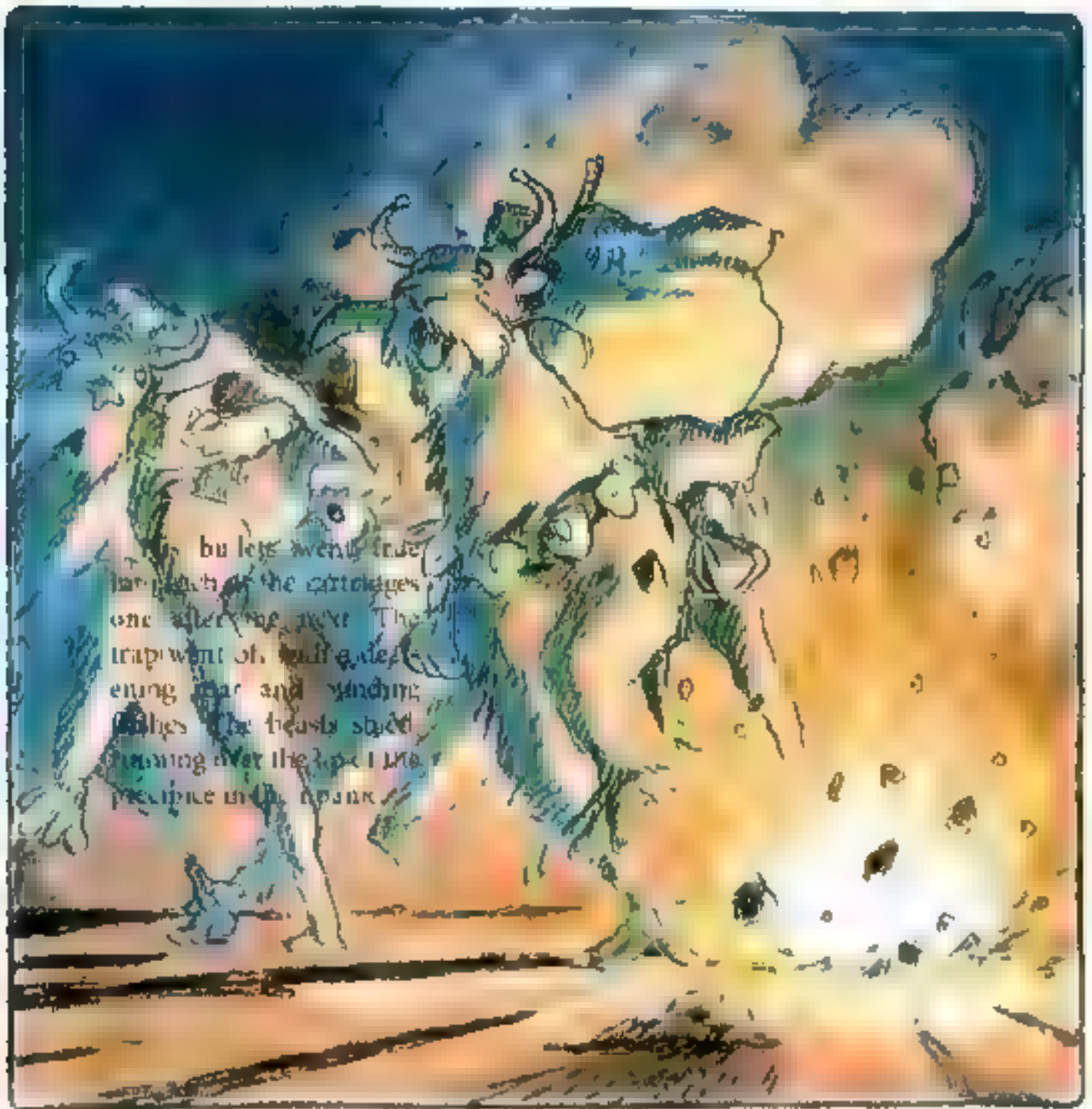


and then dug out a place for himself in the sand to hide, and silently waited.



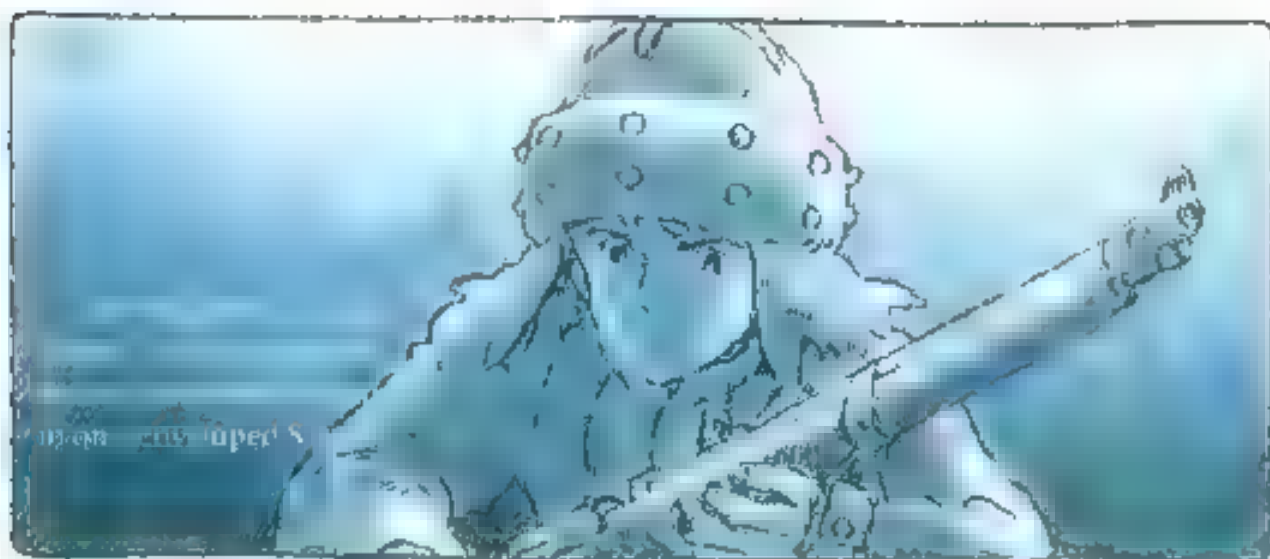
Shuna started setting up goat traps he had earned at his village. He constructed several small mountains from small stones at the very edge of the precipice, setting gun cartridges within them,



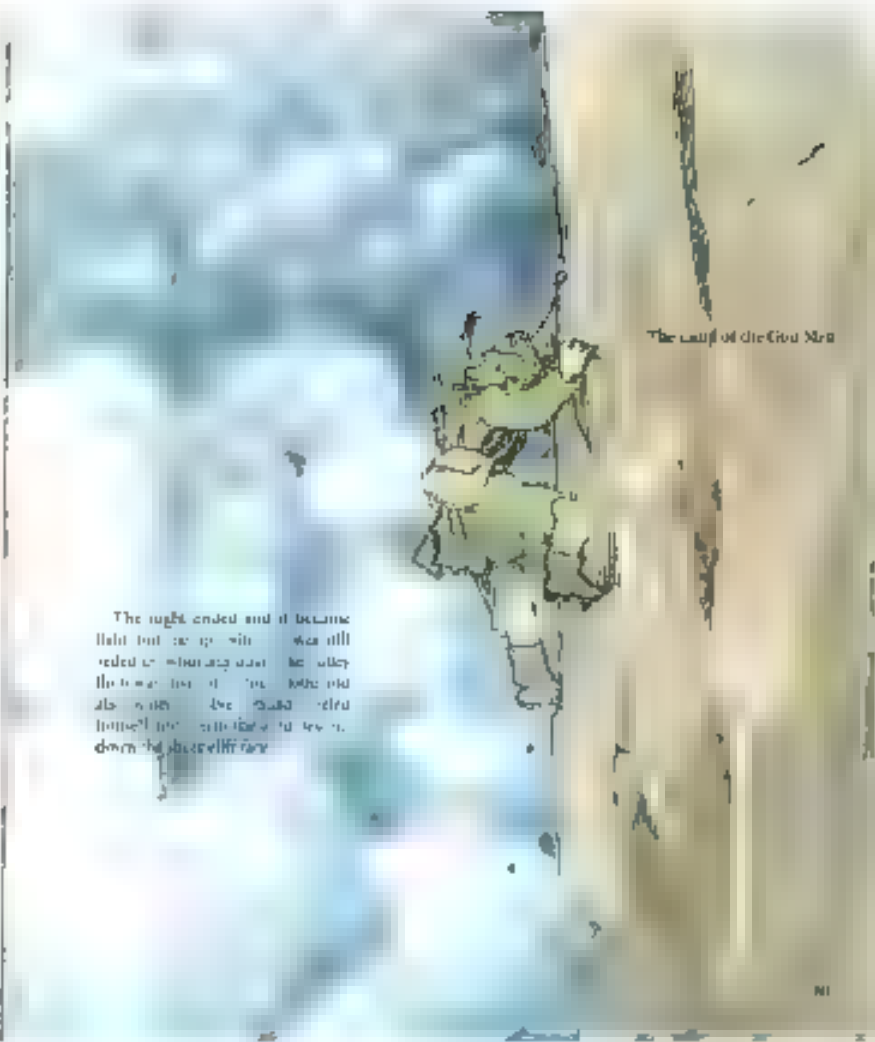


The bullets went true
 through the cartridges
 one after the next. The
 trap went off, and the
 engine car and yarding
 cables. The beasts started
 running over the top of the
 precipice into the bank.



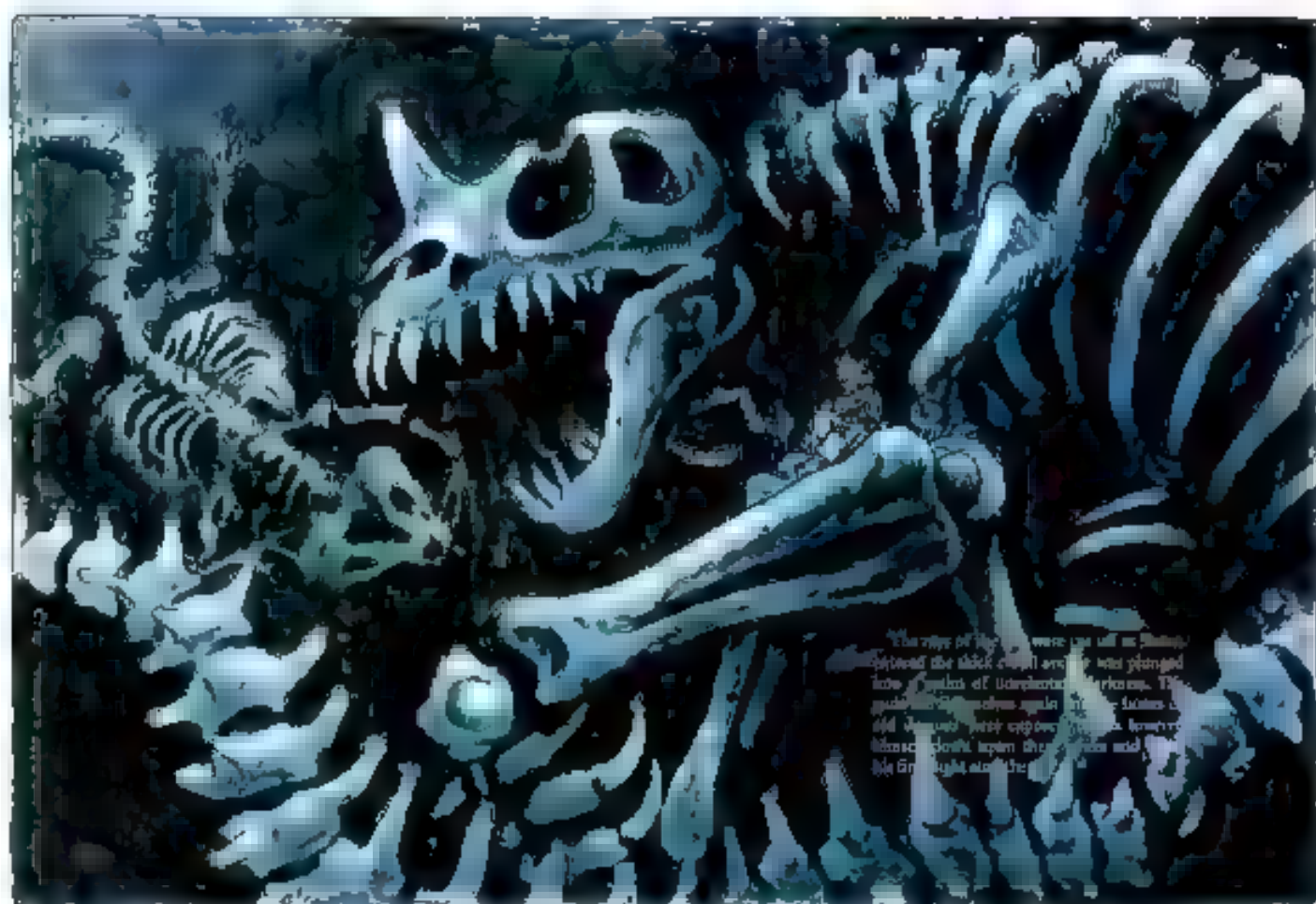


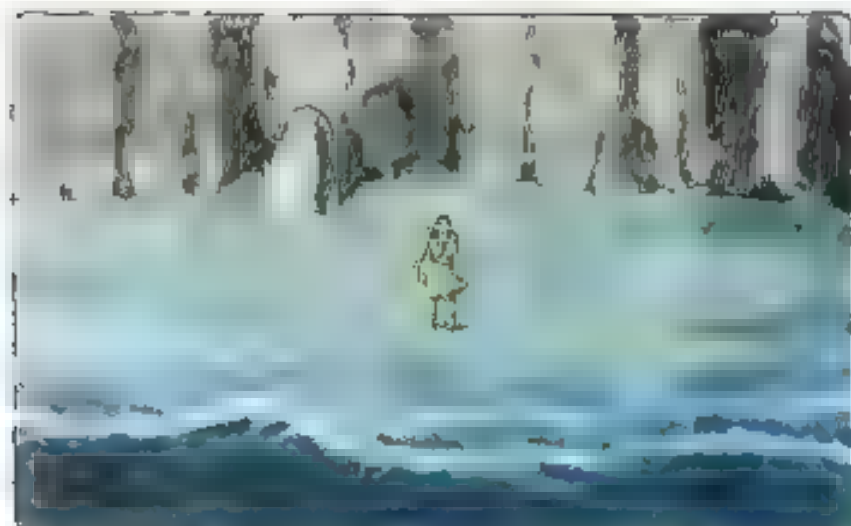




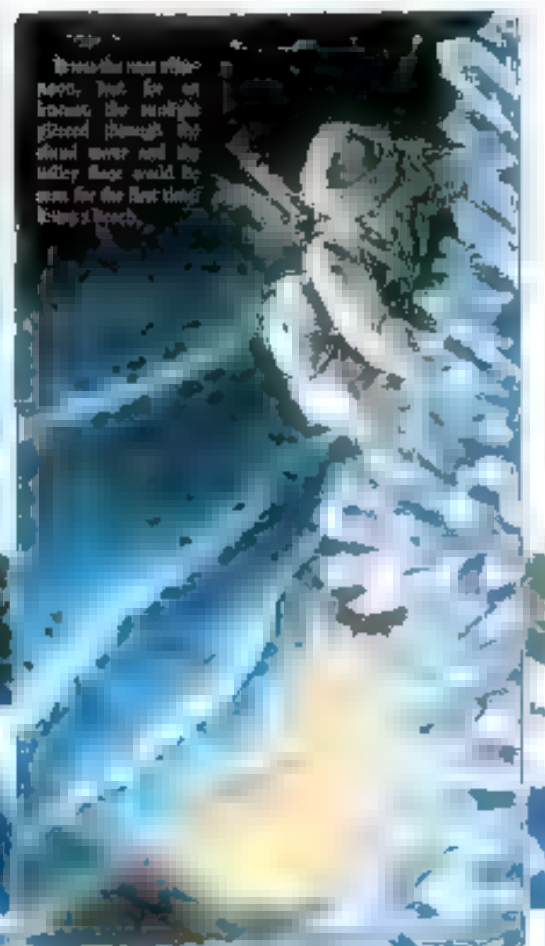
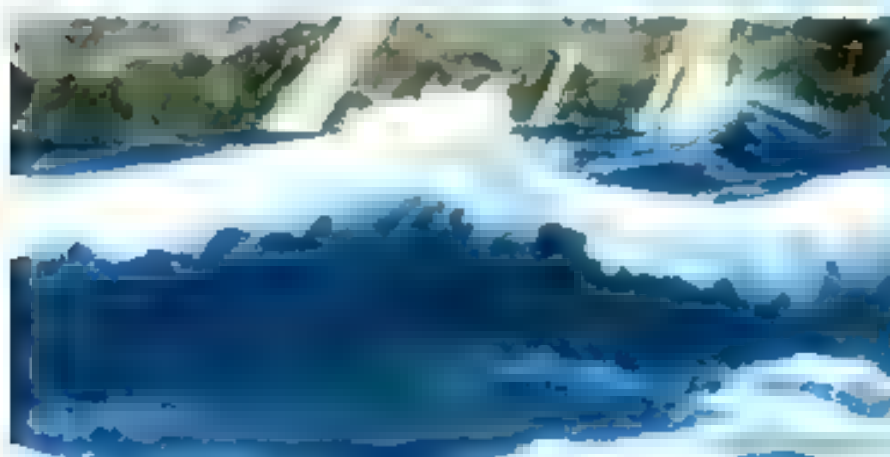
The night ended and it became
 light but the night was still
 ended in a way that was
 the way that the night had
 also ended. The night ended
 himself in a way that was
 down by the water.

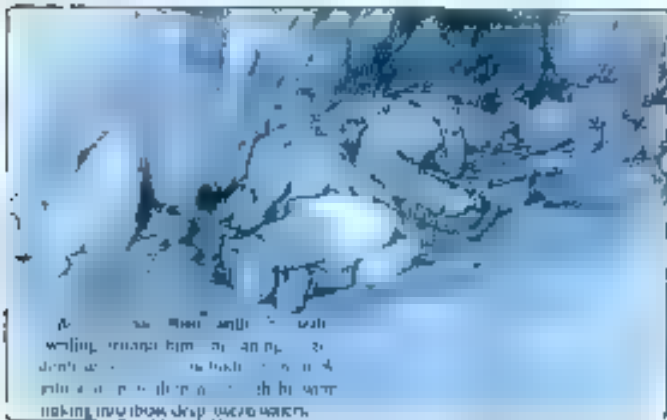
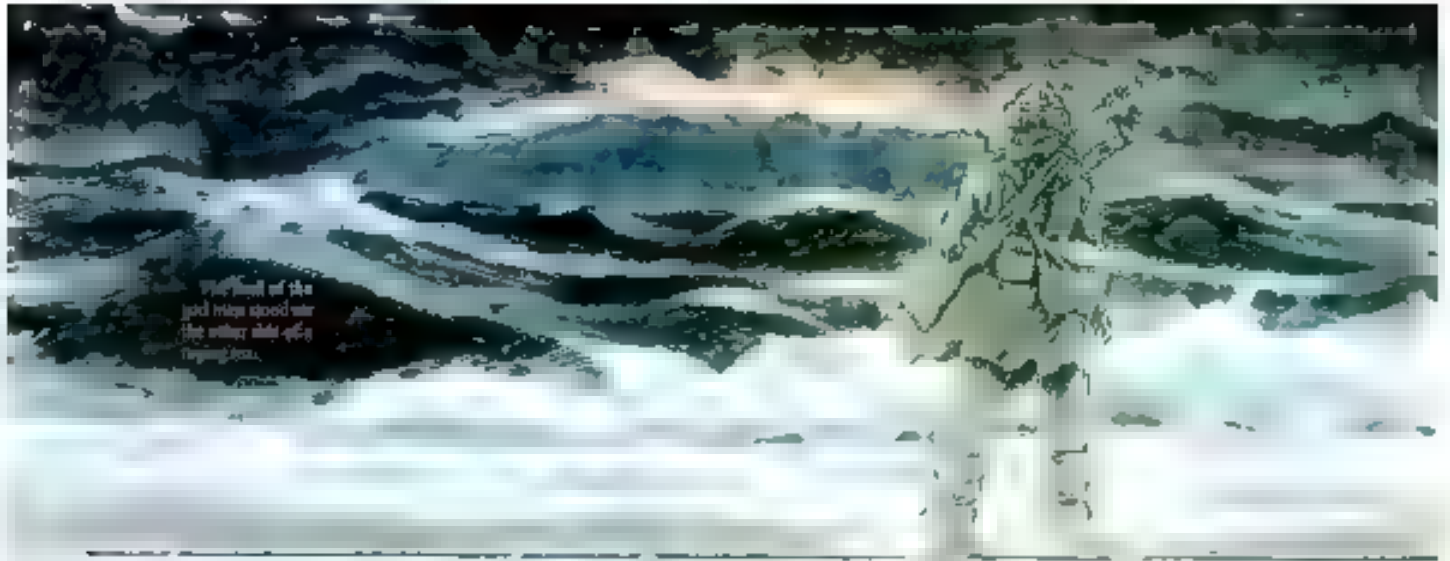
The Land of the Great Sea





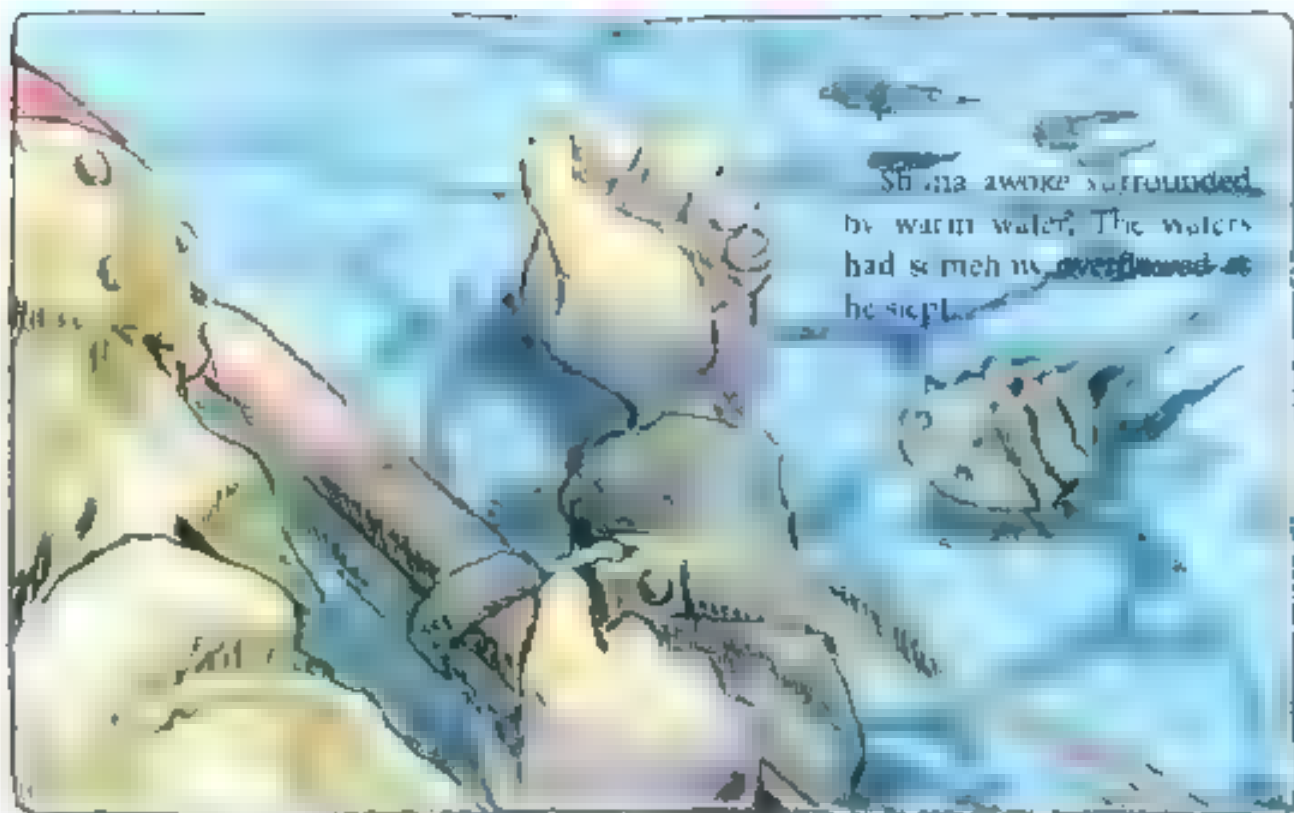
It was the next afternoon, but for an instant, the sunlight gleamed through the dead water and the valley floor could be seen for the first time since King's death.



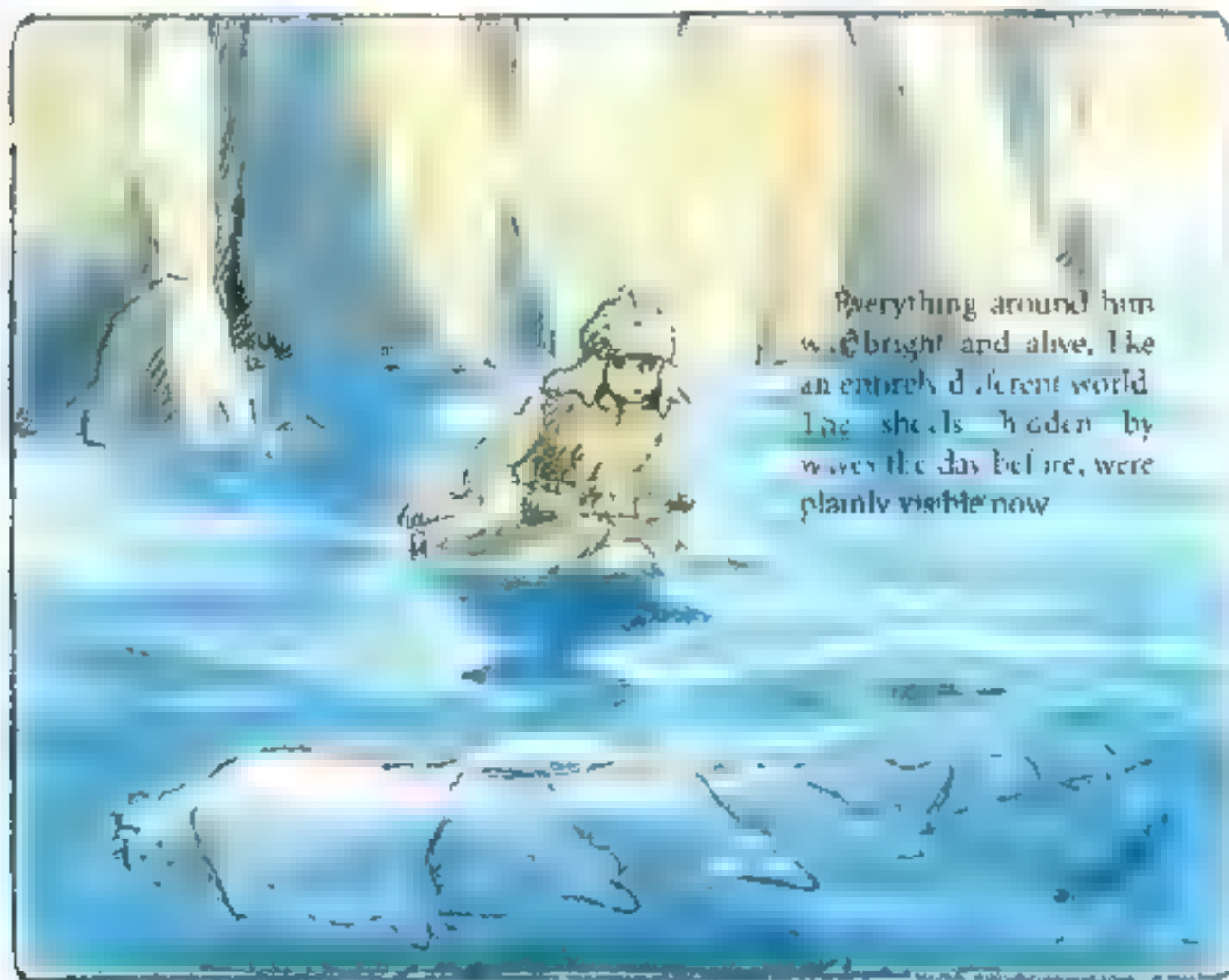


התורה והנבואה הן שתי דרכי חינוך
לילדים ולנו. הן מלמדות אותנו
על אלוהים, על העולם, על החיים
ועל המוות. הן מלמדות אותנו
על חשיבות המשפחה, על חשיבות
הקהילה, על חשיבות המצוות.





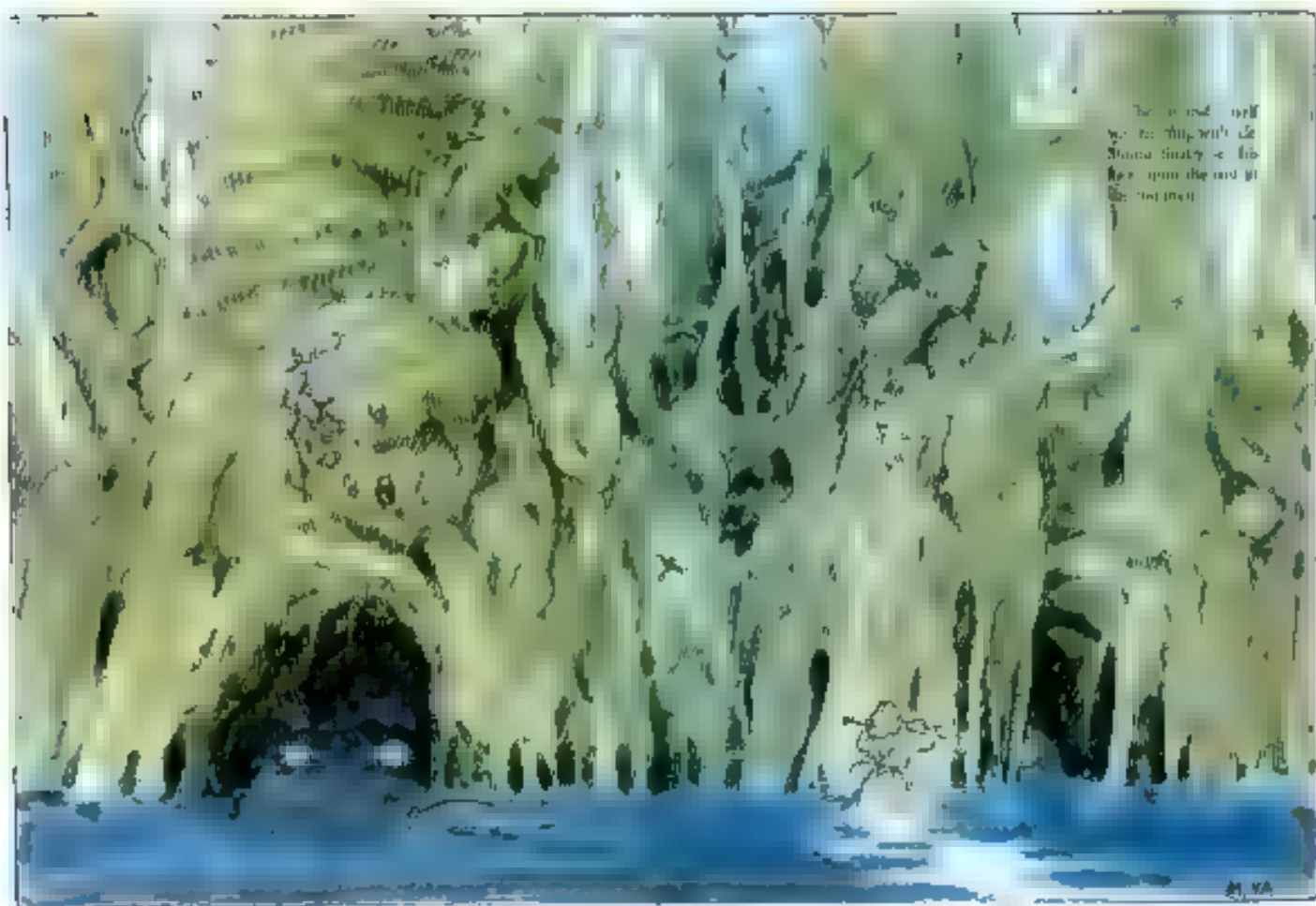
Shima awake surrounded
by warm water. The waters
had so much he overflowed at
he slept.

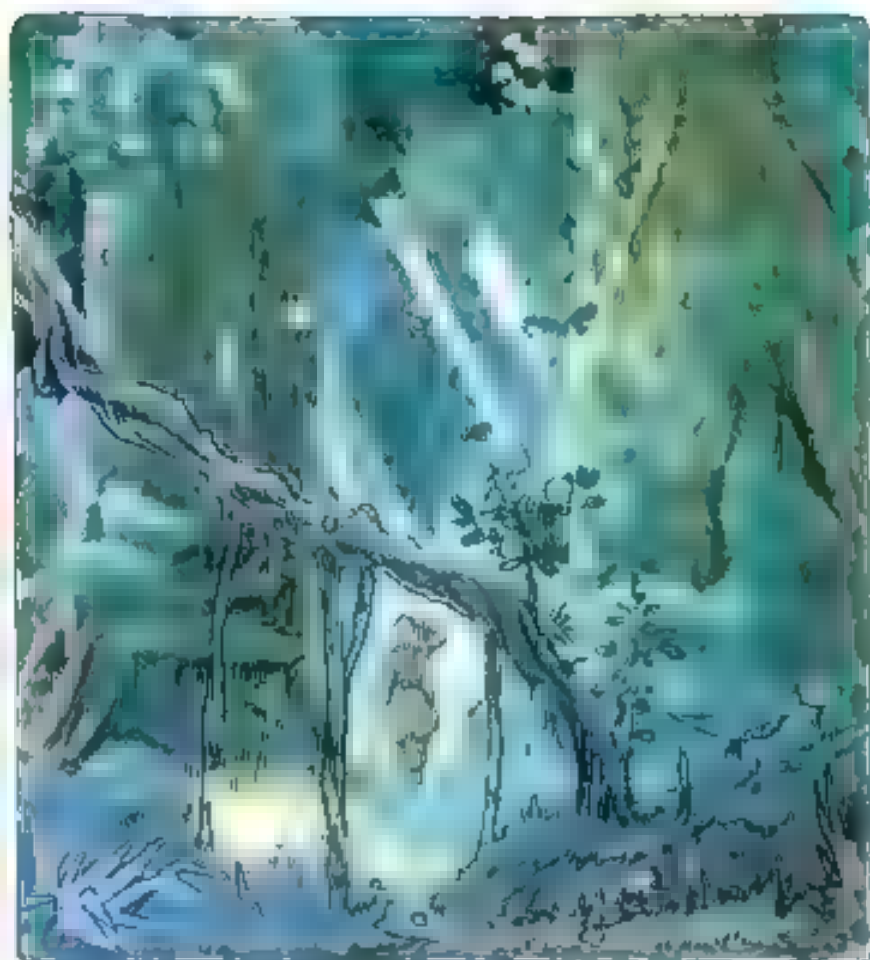


Everything around him
was bright and alive, like
an entirely different world.
The shells hidden by
waves the day before, were
plainly visible now.

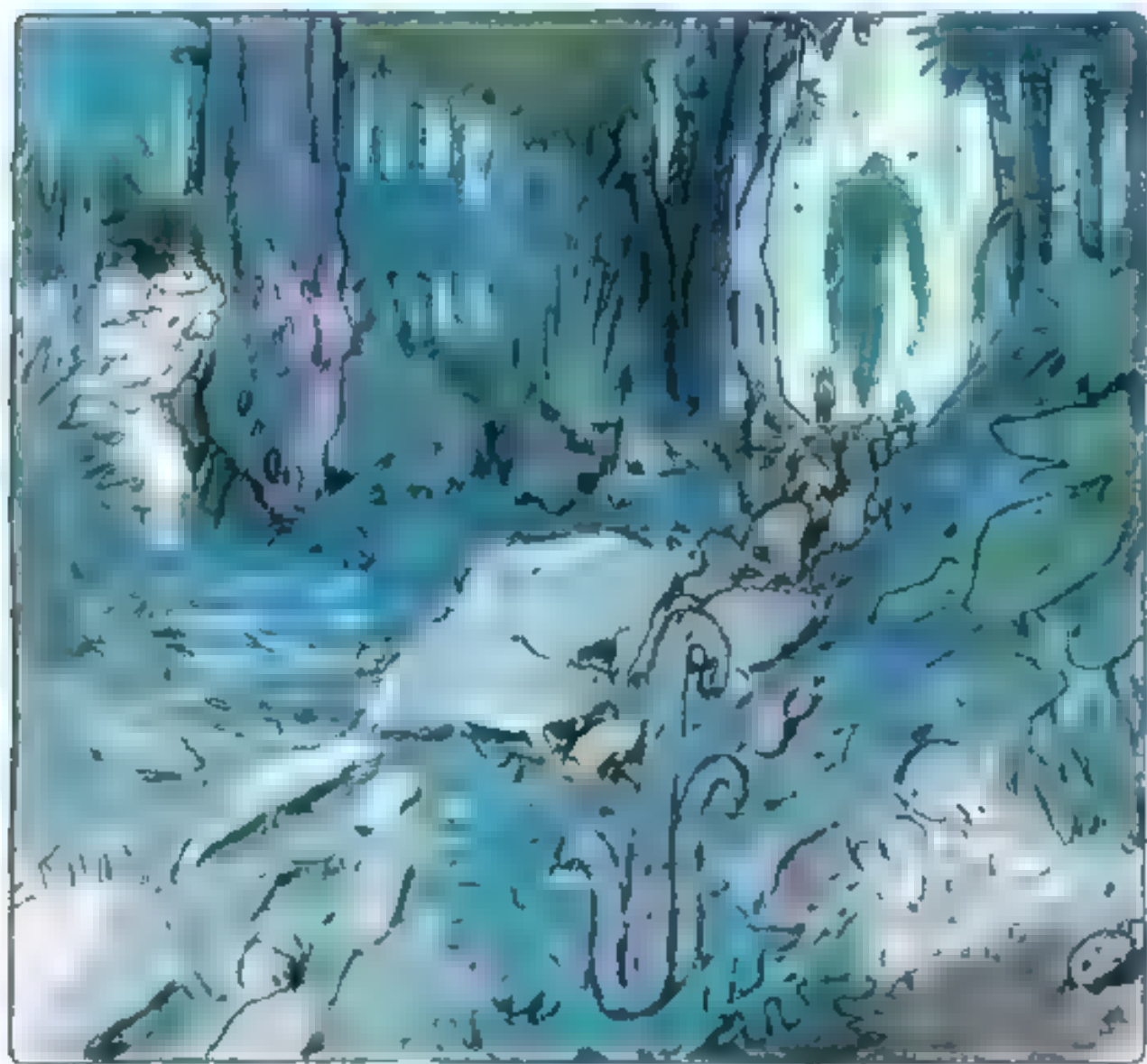
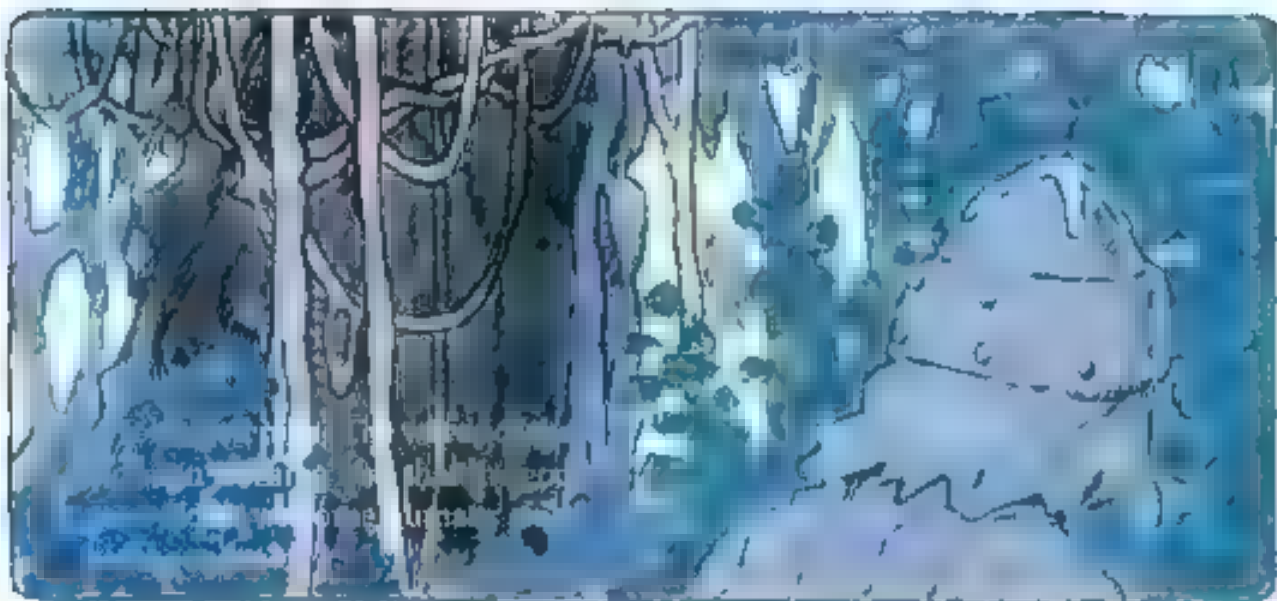


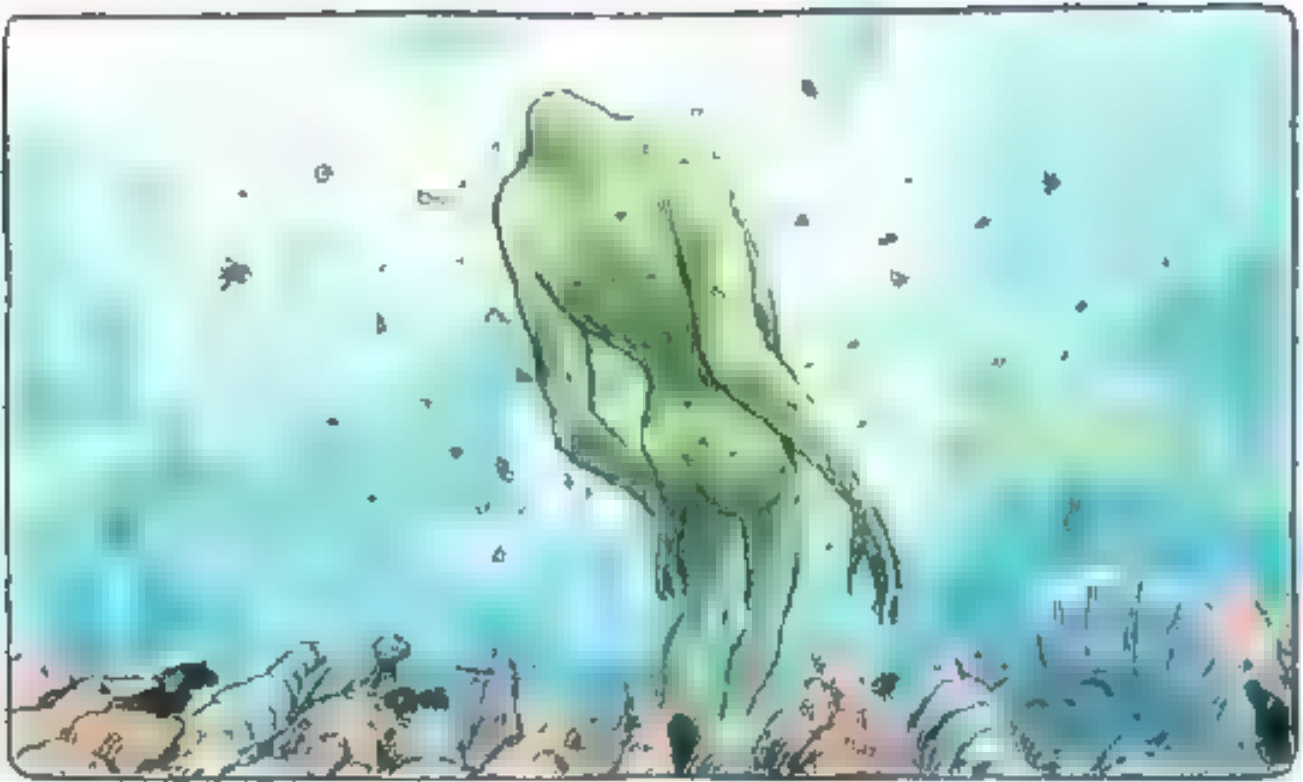
He found himself walking along a shoal that joined to the island as the brine retreated. The sea was full of living things. All of the species which had died out in the past were alive here.











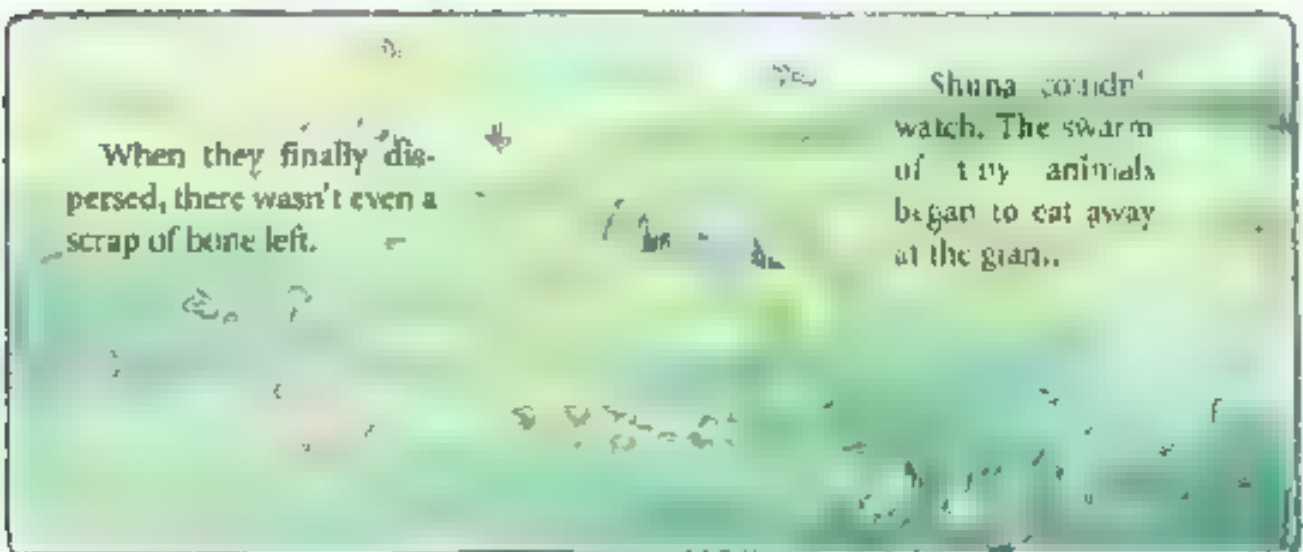
Then it
slowly tel



Reaching the field in
the middle of the forest,
the giant paused.

When they finally dis-
persed, there wasn't even a
scrap of bone left.

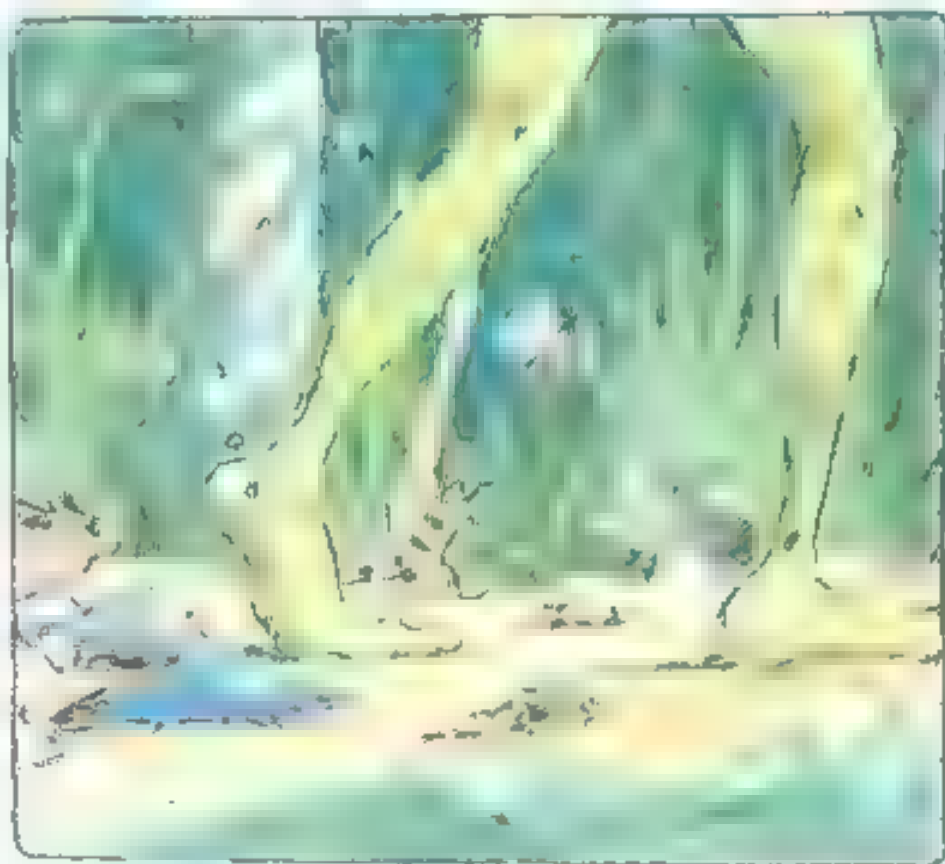
Shuna couldn't
watch. The swarm
of tiny animals
began to eat away
at the giant.

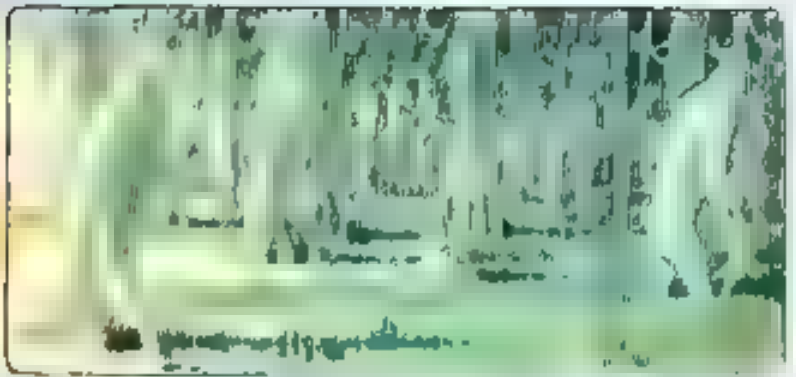




The very moment the giant completed its walk, Shuna came face to face with another. This giant gave no reaction upon seeing him, and passed on by with an expression of supreme tranquility on its face. It was wounded.

"He's going there to die...", Shuna whispered with a shudder.





More and more guests began to appear. Running after the
 others, they suggested by tripping the tree trunks, and
 why only the children.

And, in the same way, what was happening.

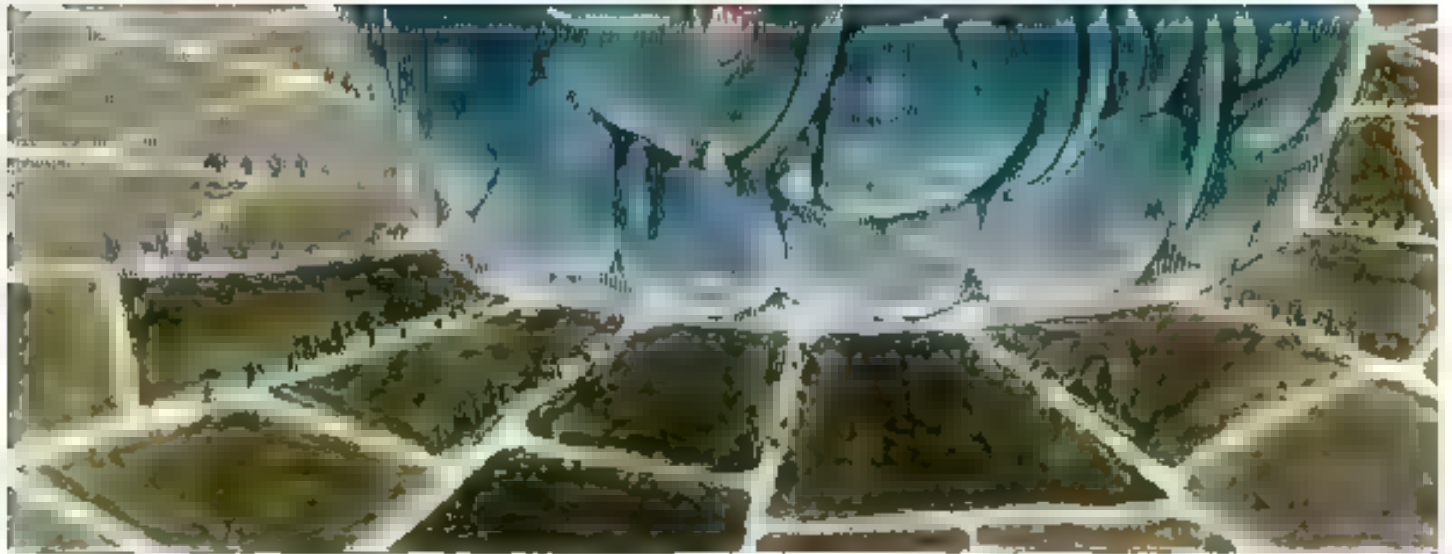
Simple building, let me know, with nothing, and
 and the other, and the other, and the other, and the other,
 as, all the birds, with the birds.





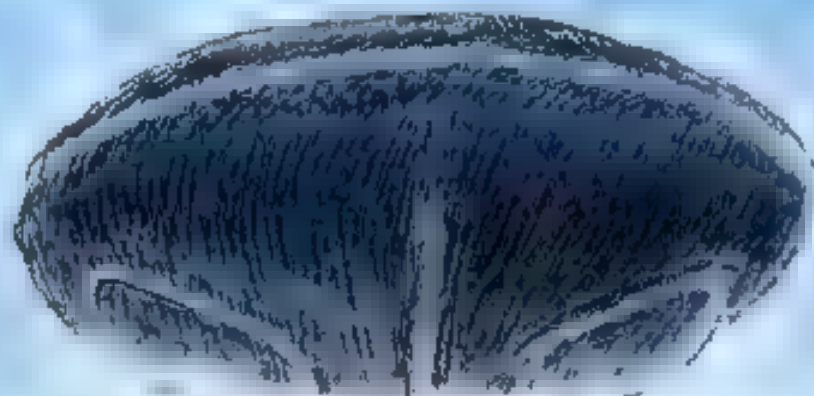






the people who had been
while they were in the
Or had they been changed into
which had this little story
to tell.

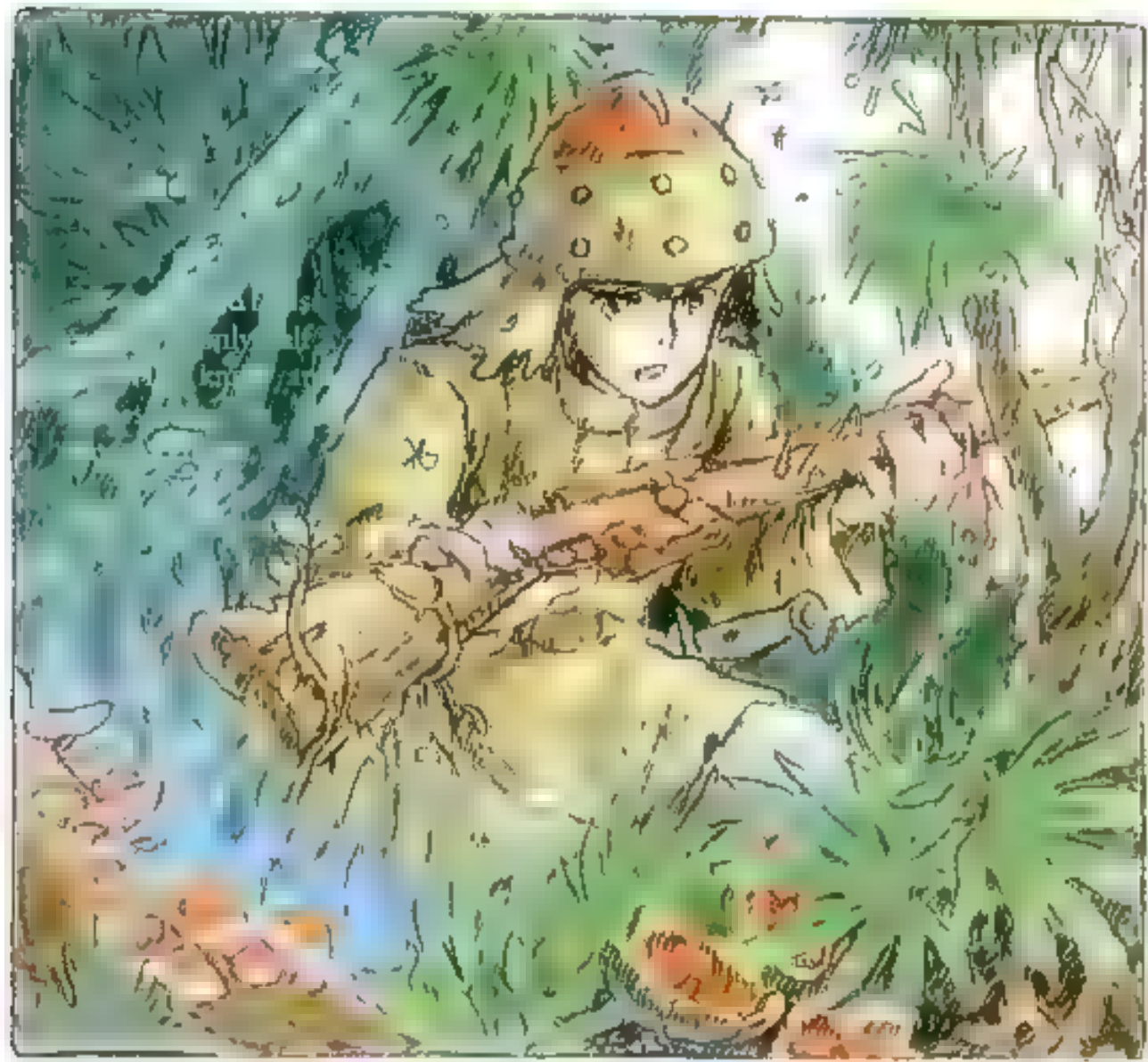
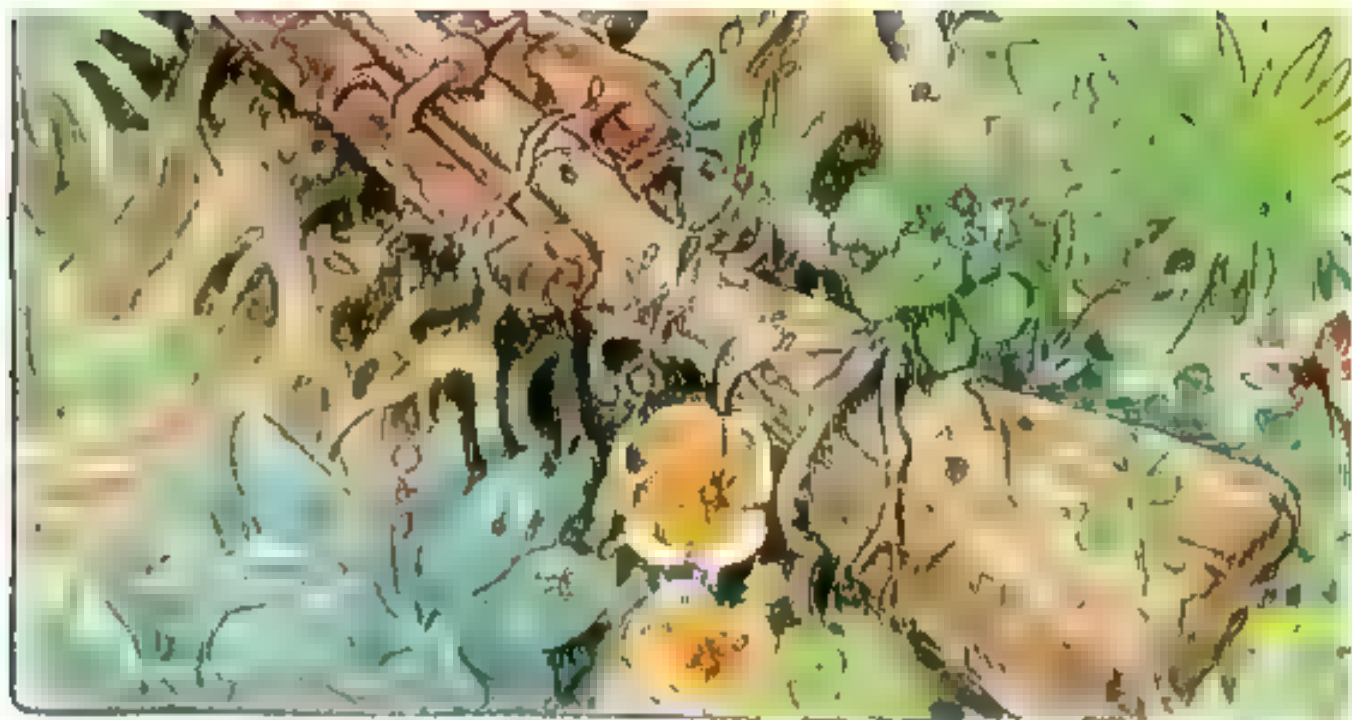
Some of them were working
the field, spraying golden seeds
the earth from their hands.



The giants never
rested, dipping up
the water and sprink-
ling it over the field.
When the sun rose,
the seed had already
started to sprout.



By midday,
the sports had
started to open.



The grain has
already begun to
ripen with colour


can't wait any
longer Time passed
differently here



His car reached to touch the ground as it
made noise the game suddenly began in
rough and storm with open as though we
were waiting with sadness in the sun a very
apprehensive hum hum

Don't the it's enormous noise rang itself in
the ears But I think I've in the voice and picked
the game





Gritting his teeth
and clenching the
grain to his breast,
Shuna ran.

He was rewarded
with a violent shock
that ran all through
him. The sharp pain
pierced his very
marrow.














She called out
his name. Shuna
slowly turned to
face her. His eyes
were devoid of
life.


Thea didn't bother with
the saddle and gawped off
on Yekkul tall and down the
path to the south. When she
had reached the border of
the village, she saw a shape, a
specter of a person, travel-
ing along the path to the
uninhabited badlands.




Thea brought him to the shed where she and her sister slept. Shinn had lost everything. His memory, his speech, his name – and it seemed, even his emotions.

All he would do was wolf down the food given him, squatting in the darkest corner, well away from the fire.





It was winter. The only thing Shuna would do throughout the dark season besides eat was squat there and sleep. Thea told nobody about him not the old woman nor the villagers.



It was a late spring.
One early morning Tinea
led Shuna outside.

She plunged in
though land made
no small place when
waves would not
and piled up the
rocks she dug up to
make a small hole
away for Shun.



It is when people
see all sleep has
of a bring him food and
The old woman
to complain
the words of the
the old woman
the old woman

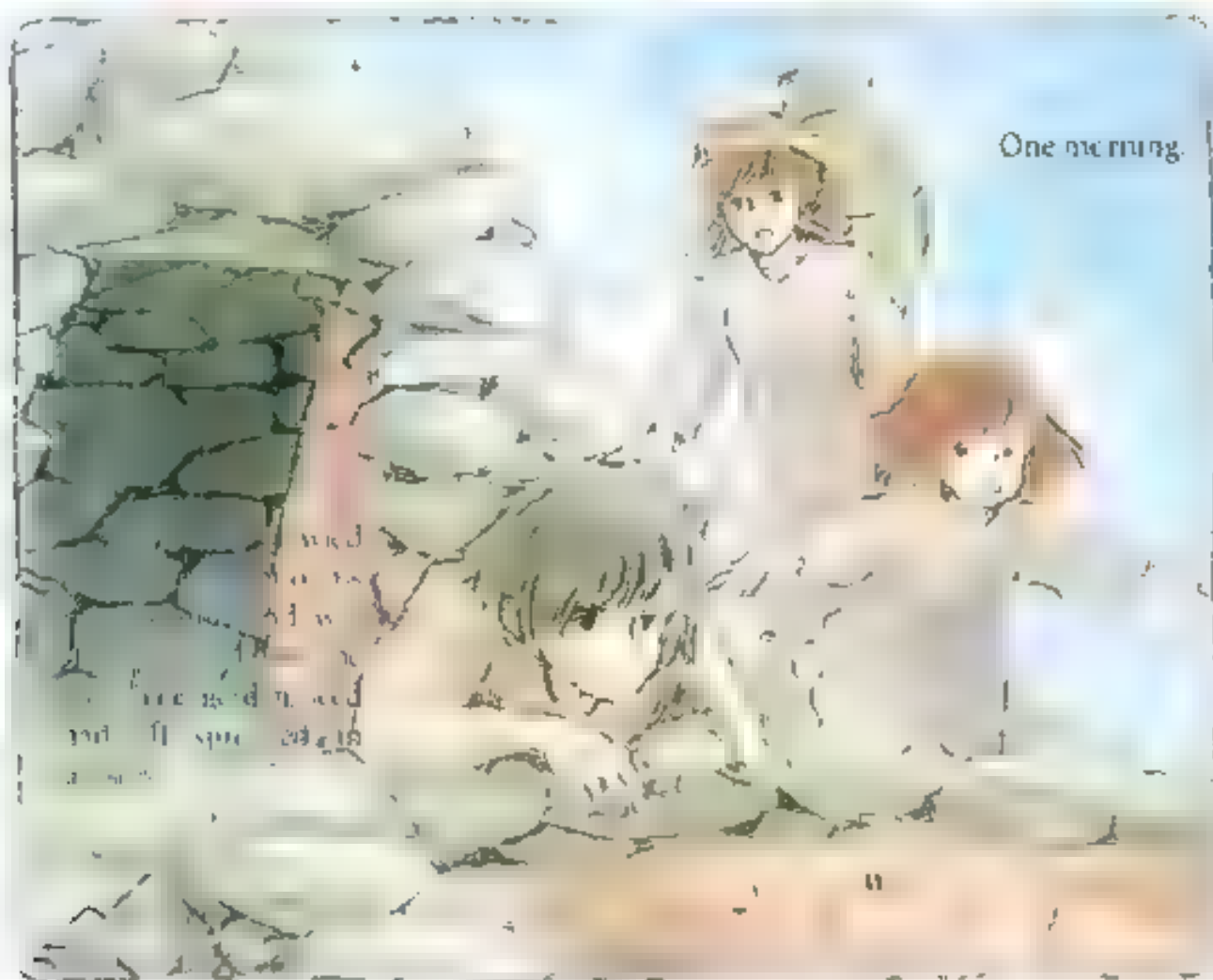



Shuna kept the pouch clutched to his chest, not making much effort to plant the seeds. Thea patiently showed him how to, but during the night, he would dig up the seeds and return them to the pouch.

When the day's work was through, she would stay up late into the night and weave cloth from the thread she had spun.



At the moment, Thea worked harder than ever before. She had to make up for what Shuna consumed.





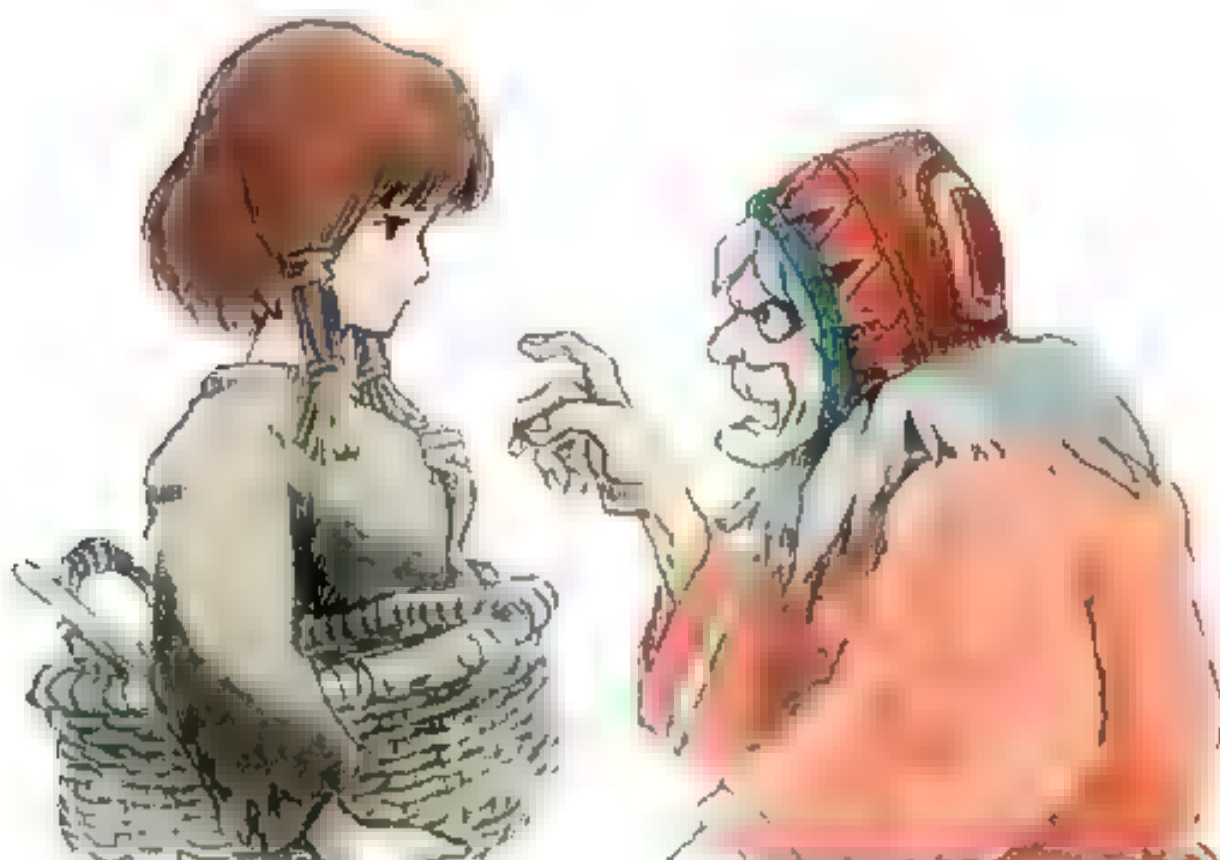
From that day on
the bare shadow of
a smile returned to
Shana's face

Seeing the green sprouts,
Thoa's little sister laughed
and danced with glee. This
little girl hadn't laughed
since her homeland had
been ravaged by ransom-
ers. Now she was dancing
round and round, like a
fairy sprite!



"If you don't like it, you're out of my house." She would pay no attention to Thea's protests. Thea worked on clothes for Shuna from the cloth she had woven.

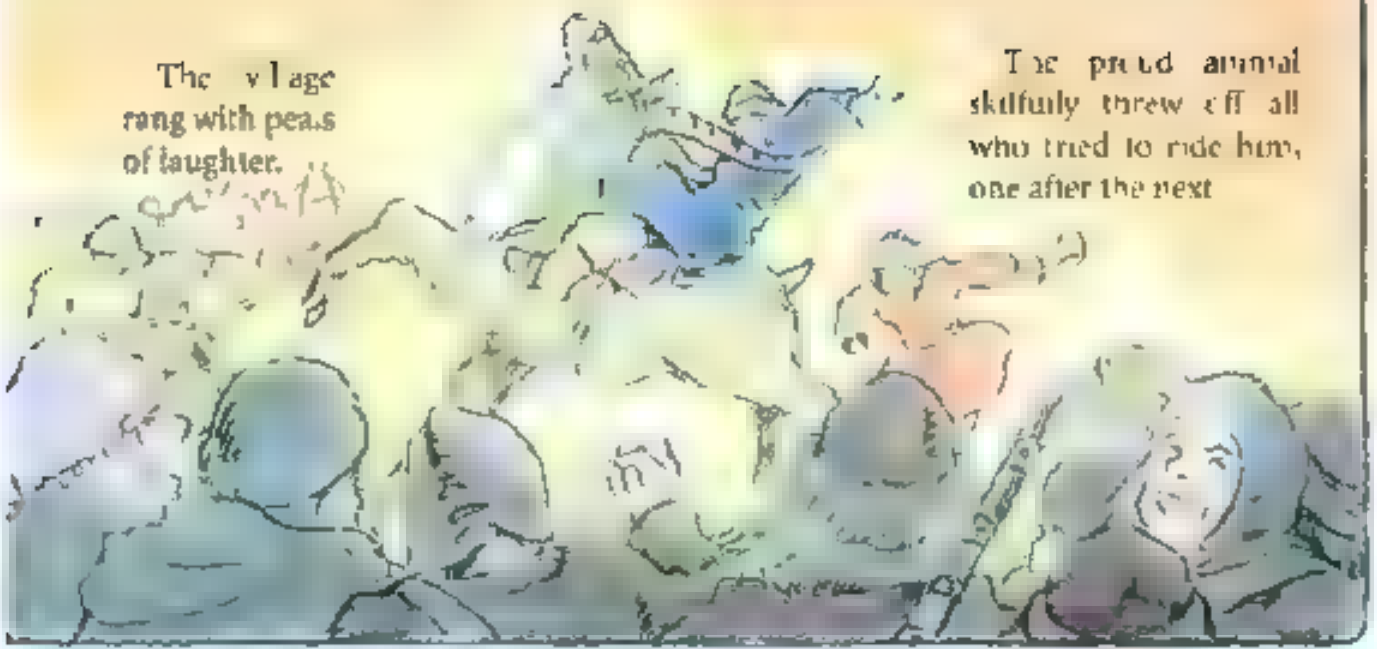
One day when the summer solstice was at hand, the old woman pulled Thea aside, "You're of age to be wed off, and I want another strong working hand." She wanted Thea to choose a husband from the young village men.





The village
rang with peals
of laughter.

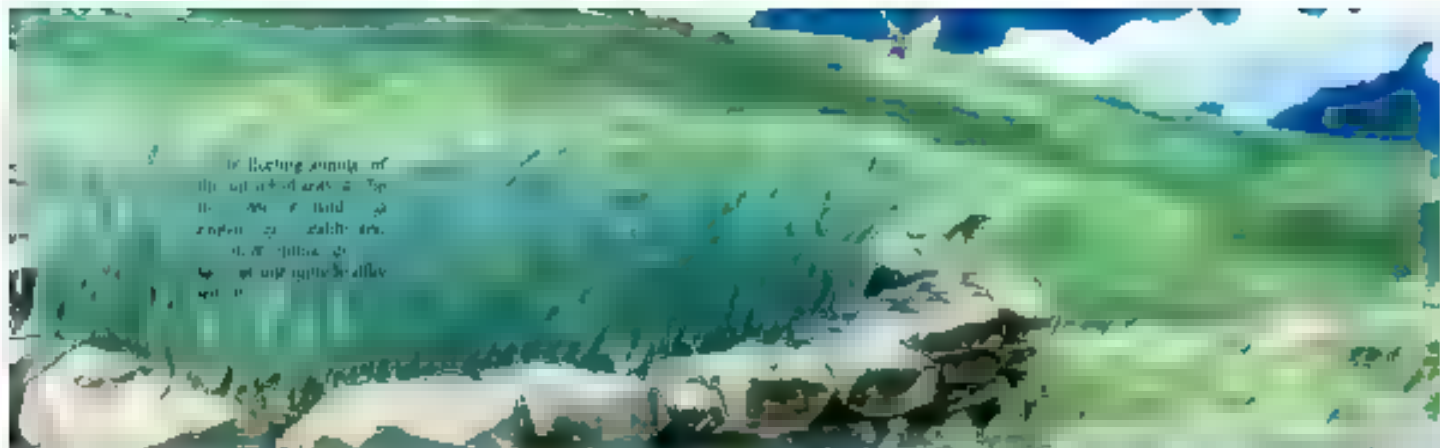
The proud animal
skilfully threw off all
who tried to ride him,
one after the next

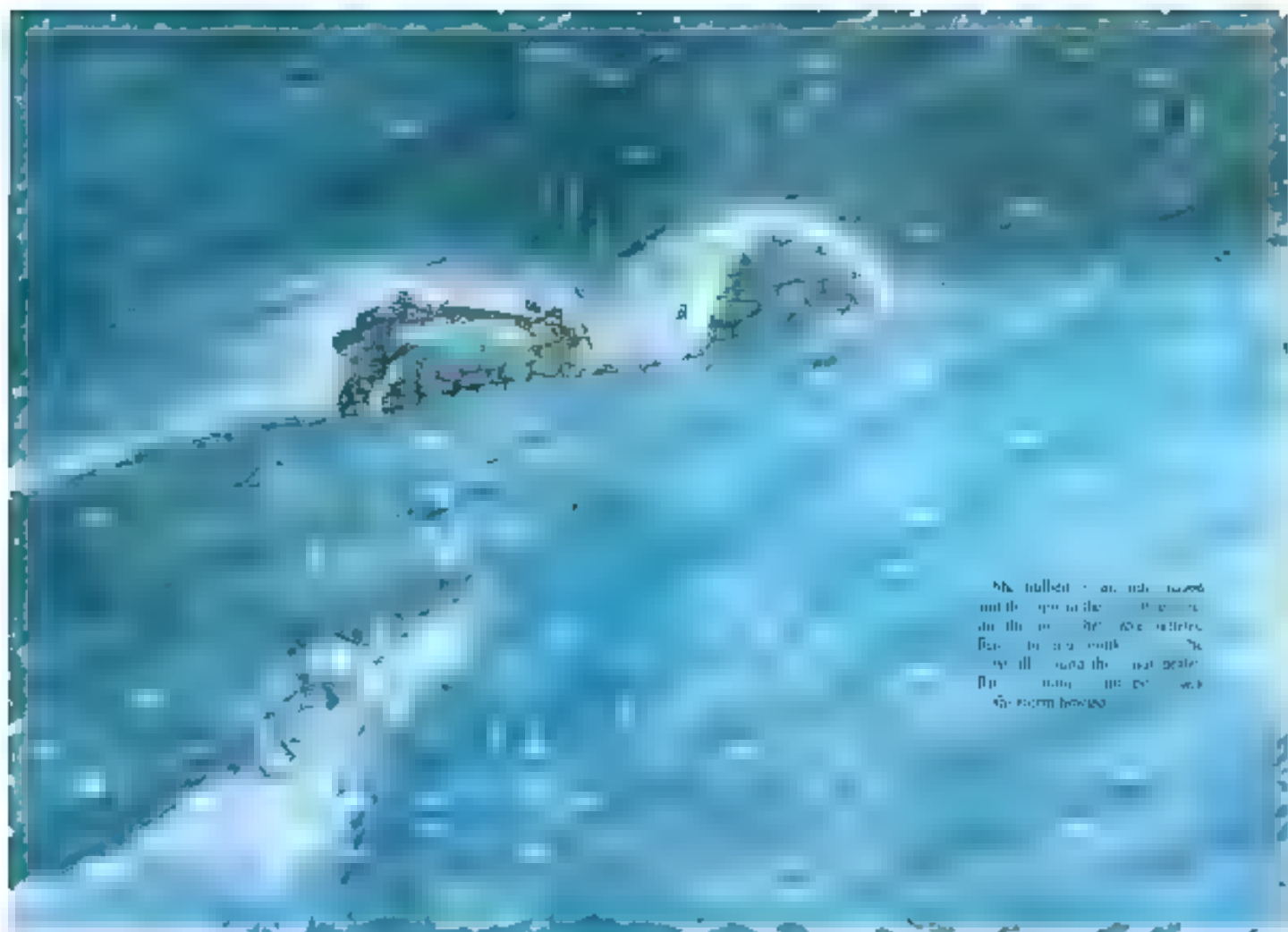


When the last suitor had sailed,
Thea's little sister appeared
leading an unfamiliar young man
by the hand. He was wearing
clothing woven from Yakkul's fur.
The eyes of master and steed
met...

The youth leapt nimbly onto
Yakkul's back. He and the animal
then leapt over the circle of villag-
ers and galloped off into the
distance. The old woman was quite
upset, but the satisfied villagers
returned to their homes.

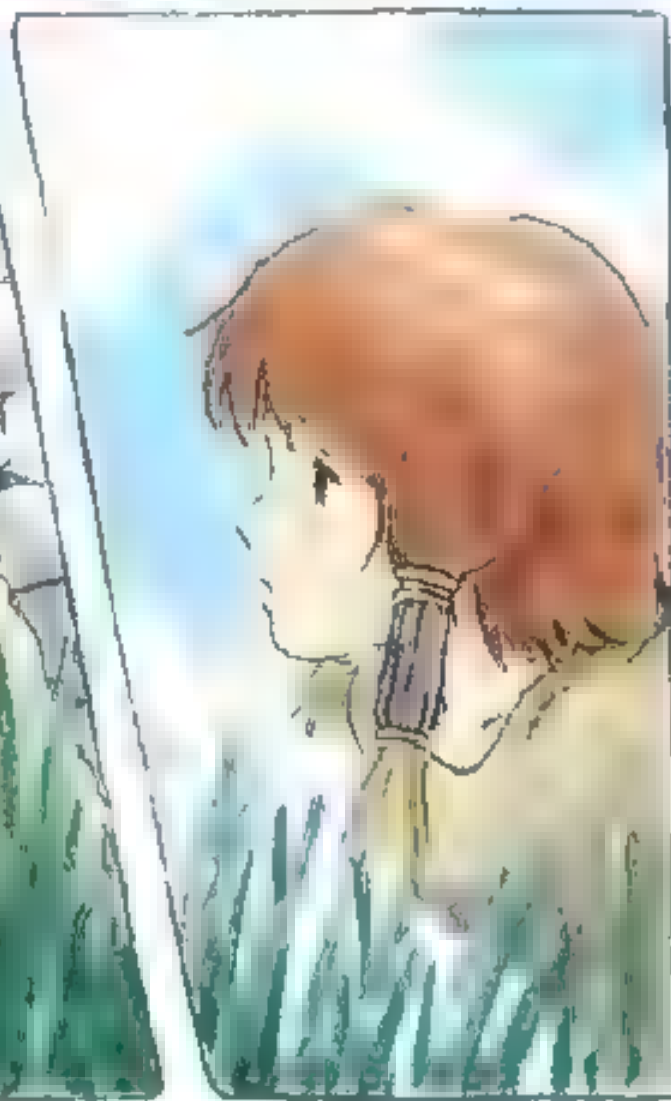






the hollow of an old house
and the open air of the street
the light of the moon
the light of the moon
the light of the moon
the light of the moon
the light of the moon
the light of the moon

They had saved the grain.
As the storm left and the
blue sky peeked through,
Thea heard a voice call her
name

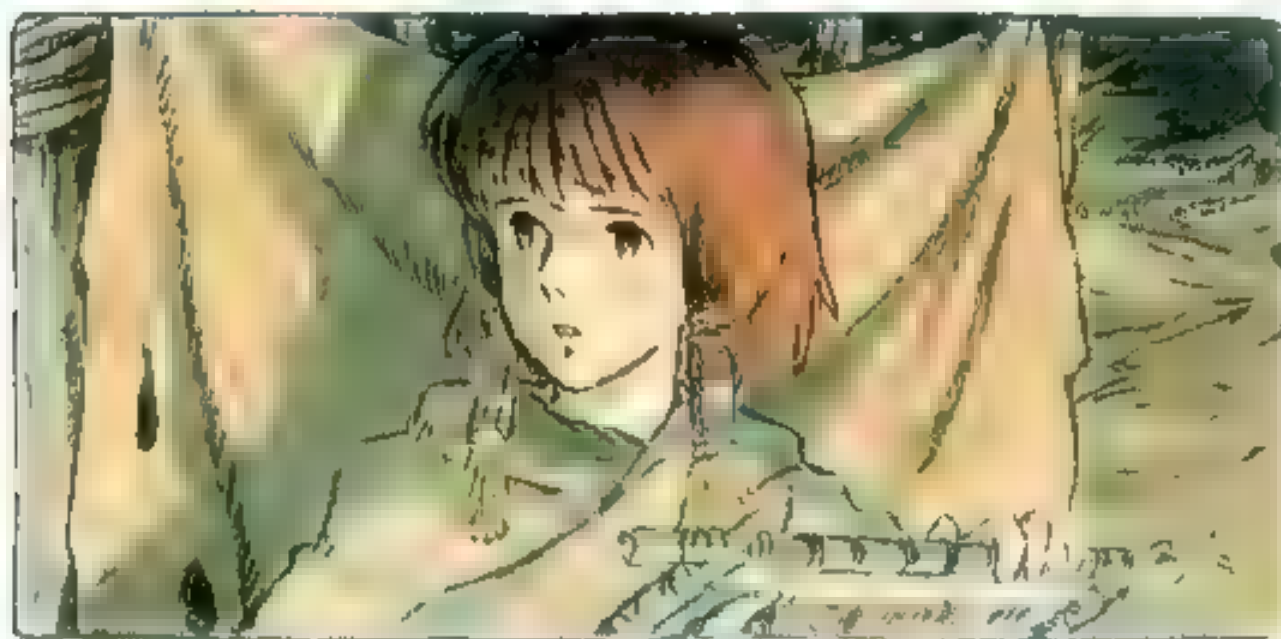




Then's tears flowed as though a dam had broken within her. She hadn't shed a tear since her village had been burnt down. The girl held Shina to her and cried her heart out.

Shina
had regained
his speech.









The stars continued to span the heavens, and the mountains still watched the land, but here was a pair who had overcome it, and here was truth.

...and they and girl
on closer side, by
side, filled with a
deep, quiet joy.

It was over.



When the day came for their departure, he left the village people with half of the golden seeds.

The villagers didn't want to let them go. The old woman, believing not being able to seed. Then one of the young men of the village and presented her with her late husband's shotgun.



In order to escape to his home-land, he stayed in the village for another year. He taught the villagers how to plant and helped to drive back the invading desert land. As a result, the desert field spread. The seed from the previous crop made for an even bigger yield.



Shun's journey wasn't over yet.
It was a long way to his village. The
hardships would undoubtedly con-
tinue.

...But that is a story best saved for
another time.

あしらい
— The Cell



Post Script

This story was based off of a folk tale from Tibet called "The prince who became a dog". The story was about a prince of a certain country who, distressed over the lack of grain that his poor citizens had, after a difficult journey, stole some barley seeds from the dragon king. For doing that, he was changed into a dog by means of magic but was saved by the love of a girl and was finally able to bring the barley back to his country.

Currently, Tibet is the only country in the world which has barley as their staple food. It is said that barley spread from Asia to the rest of the world. That is why the content which says that the Prince headed west in his journey coincides with history. Rather than saying that this folk tale was something which really happened it is better to think of it as the people of Tibet created this story out of thanks towards their crops. Since I read this story ten years ago my only dream was to make this an animation, but in modern day Japan, a simple story like this would not pass at all. Not only that but I gave up trying to get it animated in China as well. Still, this time I had the support of the publishers and I thought up my own sort of version of the story.